

RUMANIA AND HER PEOPLE

RUMANIAN ACADEMY

RUMANIAN STUDIES

I

RUMANIA AND HER PEOPLE

AN ESSAY IN PHYSICAL
AND HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

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INTRODUCTION

It is impossible to understand the life and the specific character of a people without considering the soil on which it has developed. Just as the Egyptian people cannot be understood apart from the Nile Valley, nor the Italian people apart from its peninsula set in the midst of the Mediterranean, so the Rumanian people is inseparable from the mountain citadel of the Carpathians and the Pontic and Pannonian plains at the foot of those mountains.

The purpose of the following pages is to give a brief account of Rumania — the Land, the People and the State. Three characteristic facts may be noted at the outset:

1. Rumania, of which the main chain of the Carpathians forms the backbone, is the farthest outpost of Europe facing the Ponto-Caspian steppe. The true frontier between Europe and Asia passes along the isthmus which separates the Black Sea from the Baltic.

2. On this border land, a border people (*Randvolk*) was bound to develop. In ancient times, the ancestors of the Rumanian race were already an agricultural people who had to defend themselves constantly against the incursions of the nomads of the eastern steppe and against the plundering expeditions of the warrior hordes.

3. The racial substratum of the Rumanian people is one of the oldest in Europe.

All these interconnected facts are explained by the following considerations:

I. CONTINUITY OF THE RUMANIAN PEOPLE

From neolithic times down to our own day, the inhabitants of Rumania have kept the same racial characteristics. The best authority on the anthropology of the Rumanian people makes the following statement in a recent study on this question: "Nothing prevents us from supposing that the men who built the burial huts of Moldavia ¹⁾ in the age of polished stone were of the same race as those whom the ancient historians later called Dacians and Getae" ²⁾. The same authority likewise affirms that the mixture with the Roman colonists did not efface the distinctive characteristics of the native population. "The Roman invasion and the conquests of Trajan do not seem to have appreciably disturbed the physical characteristics of the Dacian nation which was itself the descendant of the indigenous Rumanians" ³⁾.

It is to be noted, moreover, that all the neighbours of the Rumanians reached the borders of Rumania in relatively recent times. It is little more than a hundred years (1792) since the Russians reached the Dniester ⁴⁾.

The Hungarians celebrated in 1896 the thousandth anniversary of their arrival in Europe. The Serbians, and after

¹⁾ The country between the Carpathians and the Dniester.

²⁾ E. Pittard, *Étude sur l'indice céphalique en Roumanie, avec un essai de répartition géographique de ce caractère* (Bucarest), 1937, p. 92.

³⁾ This opinion is corroborated by the serological investigations carried out in recent years in the University of Cluj. The analysis of the blood, insofar as that test may be decisive, seems to demonstrate that the Dacian stock really constitutes an essential factor in the present composition of the Carpathian race. (Cultura, Cluj, 1924, p. 225).

The mixture with the elements brought in by the Roman colonisation has left clearer traces in the south-west. The brown colouring of the Rumanians of the Banat and the Ardeal and their southern facial type bear witness to an infiltration from the Mediterranean, whereas the fair (Dacian) type occurs especially in certain more isolated mountain regions. But in many parts of the country, the children have almost blonde hair which darkens only as they grow older. It would not be at all surprising, therefore, if further anthropological studies should reveal far more numerous traces of the autochthonous population than are at present suspected.

In any case, it follows from the facts thus far known that, prior to the Geto-Dacians and the Romans, who were the ancestors of the Rumanian people, history does not reveal that any other people occupied the Carpathian regions.

⁴⁾ See below.

them the Bulgarians, entered the basin of the lower Danube only after the sixth century of the Christian era.

Thus the Rumanians alone, among the peoples of this region, have known no other homeland than that which they still occupy to-day.

II. ETHNIC CONTINUITY

This age-long occupation of the same territory is to be explained, in the first place, by the cohesion of the racial stock. Herodotus tells us that the Carpatho-Danubian region was the most thickly populated in all Europe, just as the Indians were then the densest population of Asia ¹⁾. When Darius Hystaspes, whose empire extended from the Bosphorus to the Indus, made war on the Scythians, north of the Black Sea, the Greeks were compelled to accompany the army of the Persian king as auxiliaries; but the Scythians, being nomads, fled before him. The Getae alone offered armed resistance. Thus, five centuries before the Christian era, they were already a numerous people, well enough organized to dare to oppose the mightiest monarch of the time. At a time when the Romans had not even founded their little republic on the banks of the Tiber and were merely a handful of men scattered in a few villages, the Getae constituted a considerable power and dominated the whole basin of the lower Danube.

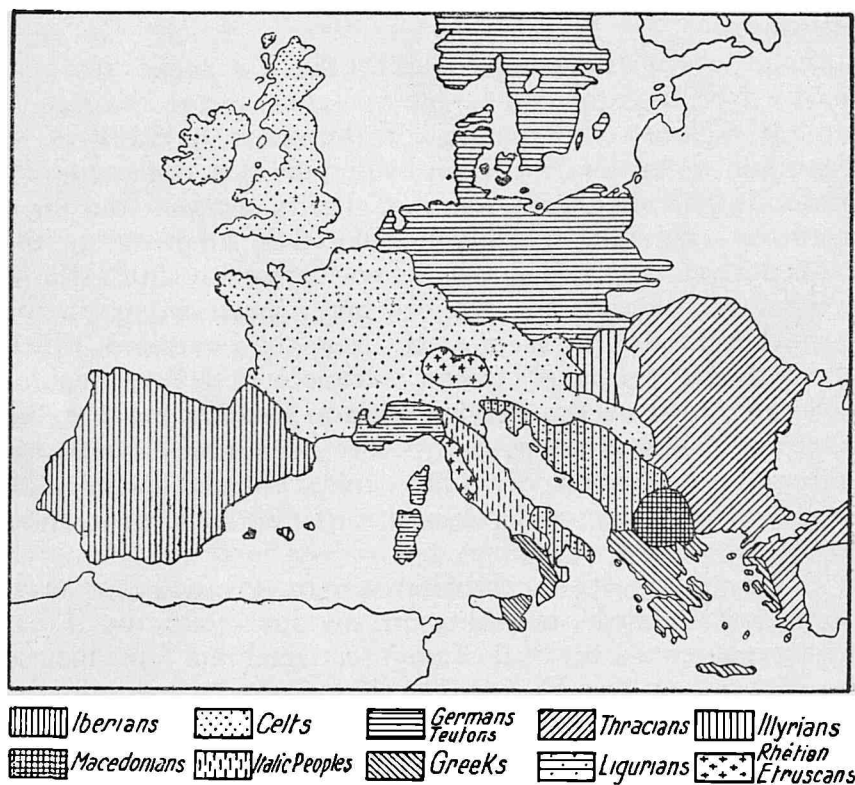
It is true, however, that, five centuries later, the Romans had made themselves masters not only of Italy, but of all the countries which encircle the Mediterranean.

Yet the Dacians — as the Latins called the Getae — had declined neither in numbers nor in vigour. Under King

¹⁾ Herodotus, V. 3. Moreover, the population of this region must have been relatively dense even in the neolithic age. This is proved by the great number of prehistoric settlements scattered over the whole extent of Rumania, as well as by the advanced civilisation attested by the ceramic remains which have been found. See, among others, the painted vase of the *Cucuteni* Collection, Andrieşescu, *Contribuție la Dacia înainte de Romani*, (cu 8 planșe originale și harta stațiunilor cu ceramică pictată). București, 1912.

Burebista, Caesar's contemporary, the power of the Dacians made itself felt from the Black Sea to the Alps ¹⁾.

The Dacians, then, after the conquest of Gaul, were the greatest continental power in Europe. Did not Caesar himself, in his struggle with Pompey, seek the friendship



Ethnographic map of Europe in ancient times

of Burebista? But a clash between Romans and Dacians had become inevitable. The conflicts lasted more than a century and commanded the attention of the whole Roman world ²⁾, recalling by their intensity the struggle against

¹⁾ Burebista was the brother-in-law of Ariovistus, the leader of the Germans who invaded Gaul.

²⁾ Horace, *Od.* III, 6: *Paene delevit urbem Dacus*; Virgil, *Georg.* II, 497: *Aut conjurato descendens Dacus ab Istro*; Dion Cassius, 51, 22.

Hannibal. Finally the Carpathians were conquered. The Dacians, like the Iberians and the Gauls, gave up their language and adopted the Latin tongue. But the mass of the Dacian population continued to live in its old territory, especially in the regions of the north and east, where the Roman colonisation was unable to make much headway.

A proof of the persistence of the old racial stock is provided by the archaic character of rural life in the mountainous regions of Rumania. The mountain dwellers in the upper basin of the Tisza still make all their utensils of wood. The shepherds of the Carpathians wear the most primitive garments imaginable, yet well adapted to the frequency of rain and snow. The shepherd's shirt, boiled in whey mixed with the juice of certain poisonous plants, is waterproof and antiseptic. His cape is a garment which serves several purposes, taking the place of a rain-coat, of a blanket or of a bed-roll. His mantle (*tsundra*) and jacket (*sarica*) of long-fibred wool are the garments best adapted to these rainy regions, while his blouse (*bunda*) and cassock (*cojoc*) of unshorn sheepskin afford the best protection against frost and snow.

A great authority on the Carpathians, Professor de Martonne, states that he has nowhere encountered a more archaic type of pastoral life than that which he has seen at the sources of the Jiu and of the Cerna¹⁾.

The style of dwelling also provides proof of the continuity of the Dacian race. If the mountaineer's costume is still that which is represented on Trajan's column, the same is true of his house. *Bordei* — a sort of troglodyte dwelling such as is mentioned by the ancient writers — are still to be seen on the steppe. In the *lunca* — the flood-plain of the Danube — use is still made of dug-out pirogues similar to those which were used by Alexander of Macedon to cross the river during his wars with the Getae.

¹⁾ *La Valachie*, 1902, p. III.

Thus the invasions of the nomads, who were never very numerous, passed over this numerous and ancient people almost without leaving a trace.

When, therefore, the wavey invasions had passed, the Rumanians were still occupying not only the territory of ancient Dacia, but also outlying regions to the east, in the direction of the Bug, where they were known as the Bolochoveni, and to the west as far as the Adriatic in Epirus, in Albania, in Dalmatia and in Istria.

III. CONDITIONS FAVOURING THE PERSISTENCE OF A HOMOGENEOUS PEOPLE

If the persistence of a Rumanian race is attributable, *inter alia*, to its ethnic homogeneity, that homogeneity itself is due to the advantages of an exceptionally favourable geographical environment.

Two or three thousand years ago, no region in all Europe, apart from a few small Mediterranean areas, was more favoured by nature than the basin of the lower Danube. The northern parts of the continent were covered with forests and marshes like those of Canada or Siberia (though with a totally different climate), so that they were necessarily very sparsely populated. This was true also of the steppe which stretched from the eastern slope of the Carpathians to Asia; like all steppes, it must have been thinly peopled. On the other hand, the agricultural region of the lower Danube — the river which was believed in those days to be the largest in the world — possessed a great variety of vegetable, animal and mineral wealth. The region was renowned, in the first place, for its cereals. Did not the hoplites of Alexander the Great, when they crossed to the left bank of the Danube, have to force a path through luxuriant grain-fields by flattening with their horizontally-held spears the blades of wheat which hindered their advance? From the first century A. D., the grain of the Danube could supply the Roman market.

In addition to these cereals, Dacia possessed extensive vineyards — so extensive that at one time it was found necessary to limit cultivation ¹⁾. Animal husbandry was so flourishing that Philip of Macedonia had 20,000 stallions brought from the Getic steppes of the Danube to improve the breed in his own country ²⁾. The fisheries of the Danubian lakes, or *bălți*, and of the lagoons of the Delta were likewise very productive; the budget of the city of Istros was chiefly dependent on the income from the sale of salt fish. Finally, the chief mineral resources were salt and gold — a source of wealth then unique in the world, for Dacia was at one time the California of the Ancient World. The product of its mines so effectively covered the deficit of the whole Roman Empire that Trajan was able to suspend the collection of taxes and at the same time to undertake gigantic public works ³⁾. Even local industry was in some respects remarkable. The hemp of the Danube was so finely worked that the Greeks were hardly able to distinguish between linen and hempen tissues ⁴⁾, and the renown of the Danubian carpets (*istriana*) had spread as far as Athens ⁵⁾.

It is clear that conditions in Dacia were such as to support a very dense population. The topography of the country, moreover, made it easy for the population to defend itself against foreign incursions. Unlike the Alps, with its abrupt peaks covered under eternal snows, the Carpathians have many flat-topped summits at a moderate altitude which permits the development of rich pastures and sometimes even the growth of certain crops (up to 1,000 metres above sea-level). This physical characteristic made it possible for the population to find its subsis-

¹⁾ Strabo, VII, II.

²⁾ Viginti millia equorum ad genus faciendum in Macedoniam missa (Justin, IX, 2).

³⁾ Jerome Carcopino, *Les richesses des Daces et le redressement de l'Empire Romain sous Trajan*. Dacia, I, pages 28—34.

⁴⁾ Herodotus, IV, 74.

⁵⁾ Hesychius, on the words *ιστρίανὰ*, *ιστρίανιδες*, *ιστρίδες*. Jordanes was to write at a later date: omnibus barbaris Getae sapientiores semper existerunt Graecisque pene consimiles. (*De Getarum sive Gothorum origine et rebus gestis*, V, 40).

tence in the mountain itself. Moreover, the many interior and peripheral depressions of the Carpathians and, in particular, the forests provided excellent refuges in time of trouble. It is not surprising, therefore, that the ancient writers should have stressed the close ties binding the Dacians to their mountains (*"inhaeret montibus Dacus"*).

These circumstances explain why the migrations of the Middle Ages could pass over this solid block of people without dispersing it. It must even have grown both internally and externally, to judge by its expansion beyond the confines of ancient Dacia. In 1234, we find the Pope complaining that, in the eastern part of the Carpathians, the Catholics who had settled in that region through colonisation or because of other circumstances, are assimilated by the native element and disappear, while, in 1239, the King of Hungary, Bela IV, announced to the Holy See that the population was manifestly increasing¹⁾. This absorption of foreigners, especially of those of a different religious faith, would clearly not have been possible without a real numerical superiority of the native stock.

To sum up, a geographical environment favourable to agriculture, to pastoral life, to the cultivation of the vine and to fishing amply explains the formation of a considerable mass of population at this point of the earth's surface, while its preservation at critical periods is accounted for by the orographical features of the country; in those days great forests²⁾ not only covered the Carpathians, but also spread out at their foot, forming two vast belts, one reaching from the eastern Carpathians to the Dniester (the typical *codru*), the other — the *vlasia* — from the southern Carpathians to the Danube.

¹⁾ Hurmuzaki, I, 1, 183: ... Populi multitudo supercreverit.

²⁾ The experience of centuries is expressed in a popular proverb: "*Codru e frate cu Românii*" — the Rumanian is the brother of the forest. It is significant, too, that the word *codru* is one of the few Dacian words which have been preserved in the Rumanian language, whereas the names of trees are almost all Latin: *fagu*, *ulmu*, *cornu*, *frasinu*, *pinu*, *juniperu*, etc. Thus the forests, like the mountains, are closely bound up with the identity of the Rumanian people.

IV. CONTINUITY IN CIVILISATION

Besides the purely geographic conditions which have now been enumerated, there is a factor of racial psychology which has greatly contributed to the persistence of this Carpathian people, namely, a unity of outlook on life. While all the neighbours of the Rumanians adopted Christianity only very late in the Middle Ages — less than a thousand years ago in some cases, the people of the Carpathians and the lower Danube received the Gospel at a time when Christianity was still a persecuted religion. The word “martyr” (*martor*) ¹⁾ still retains in Rumanian the meaning of *witness*, so closely has the notion of solemnly affirming a thing been identified with the idea of professing the Christian faith.

There is, however, nothing surprising in this early conversion of the Daco-Romans to Christianity. Perhaps no other people throughout antiquity was closer to the Christian conception of life than the Dacians. For centuries they had believed in the immortality of the soul and had been monotheists. The Greeks called them “the immortals” ²⁾. In contrast with the sometimes unduly sensual life of the Mediterranean countries, many Dacians lived as ascetics, devoted to contemplation. The Danube was for them a scared river, like the Ganges for the Hindus. Strabo, who had visited so many countries and seen so many peoples, says explicitly that “the race of the Getae (i. e. Dacians) has always been renowned for its piety” ³⁾. It is, then, no exaggeration to say that the people living about the Carpathians were, in some respects, Christians before Christianity. In the period of the great founders of religious systems (Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, Pythagoras), the Geto-Dacian race was so fortu-

¹⁾ This word, of Greek origin, shows that Christianity certainly came to Rumania chiefly by the Black Sea ports, where the Greek language was spoken. Greek was at first the language of Christianity even at Rome (inscriptions of the Catacombs). Cf. V. Pârvan, *Contribuții epigrafice la istoria creștinismului Daco-Roman*, Bucurest, 1911, p. 9.

²⁾ Herodotus, IV, 23.

³⁾ Strabo, III, 4. Flavius Josephus (*Antiq. Judaic.* XVIII, I, 5, 22) compares them to the Essenes, a religious sect which sought perfection in asceticism. The Getae were known therefore, as a pious people far beyond the confines of their own country.

nate as to have Zamolxis, a great sage, who preached the superiority of the spirit (i.e., the soul) over the body. In opposition to the materialistic conception expressed by the Romans in the dictum "*mens sana in corpore sano*", Zamolxis said that the body could remain healthy only in those who had a *healthy spirit*. It was precisely this inversion of values that led Socrates to give high praise to the doctrine of the Dacian lawgiver.

Thus, whatever the truth may be as to the personality of Zamolxis, the belief of the Dacians in the immortality of the soul, their monotheism, and the superiority which they attributed to the spirit over the body, had prepared and, as it were, predestined them readily to receive Christianity. This conception of life also made them abandon incineration in favour of the burial of the dead, and led them to adopt certain Roman customs in the manifestation of their piety. The ancient festival which consisted in decorating the tombs with roses — the "*rosalia*" — has been preserved down to our own day among the Rumanian peasants under the name of *rusalii*. And the obole which used to be given to Charon for the passage of the Styx is recognisable in the coin still placed in the hands of the dead to enable them to cross the bridges of Paradise.

Thus their conception of life, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, their consciousness of belonging to the Roman Empire (whence the name of *Român* as opposed to the name of *Barbarian* given to the invaders), have been the real foundations of the persistence of the Rumanian people in the Carpathians. After the withdrawal of the Roman legions, it was the Christian doctrine which served for a constitution in the simple life which the Daco-Romans lived in their villages which alone had survived the destruction of the cities by the barbarians. The tribunal (basilica) became the *biserică*, or church, and the new faith became the "*law*" (*lege* = *lex*). The *popa* (priest) took the place of the ancient Roman sacrificer, and it was he who was henceforth to perform the symbolic sacrifice of the Christian cult. The Roman magistrate became in

time an administrative chief — the *jude* (judex), whence the word *județ* signifying province, or county. Moreover, in spite of the chaos of the invasions, the Rumanians managed to preserve like a relic a Wallachian law, the *jus valachicum*, which was a traditional Rumanian law, distinct from that of their neighbours. It may rightly be asserted, therefore, that the Dacian spirit survived under the aegis of the Christian religion and of the Roman law and that it succeeded in preserving in the Carpathians the national, social and political existence of the Rumanian race. There was, finally, still another fact favouring this persistence of the race which must be recalled, namely, the neutrality, not to say the indifference, of the Rumanian people with regard to the religious beliefs of other peoples.

In fact, ever since their formation, the Rumanian people have never engaged in religious strife. The idea of carrying on militant proselytism is wholly foreign to the Rumanian mind. The formula of the Rumanian peasant is invariably the same toward all: *fiecare cu legea lui* — each with his own law (i.e., his faith, his religion); in other words, let each seek the salvation of his soul as he sees fit ¹⁾. This is why the Rumanians came to practise an unexampled tolerance, even toward heretics (The sectarians expelled from Russia—the Lipovans and others—were able to establish themselves on Rumanian soil in entire liberty). It must be added, moreover, that the Rumanians did not let themselves be converted by other peoples. While great numbers of Christians south of the Danube went over to Islam, the Rumanians remained obdurate to all the attempts

¹⁾ This placid attitude is perhaps explained by the fact that the Christianity of the Rumanian people has been chiefly rural, that is, more a matter of worship than of dogma. Living beyond the frontiers of the Empire and having turned Christian before Christianity became a State religion, the Rumanians of the left bank of the Danube had no part in the scandals which occurred even under Constantine and his sons: struggles among bishops, destitutions and other painful evils. Their church remained outside the hierarchy, contenting itself with village bishops — chapter bishops (*chor episcopi*) who can hardly have differed much from the village *popi*. Apart from Vitalis of Aquae (and even he may have been from an "Aquae" of Dacia ripensis), we find no Rumanian bishop in the list of bishops of the Danube (*series episcoporum*). Jacques Zeiller, *Les origines chrétiennes dans les provinces Danubiennes de l'Empire romain*, Paris, 1918, pp. 154–155 and 244.

made by the Turks to impose their religion on them. And when the Ottoman power was on the decline and Rumania had recovered the seaboard territory which the Turks had taken from her in the 15th century, the Rumanian State, so far from persecuting the Mohammedans established there, built mosques for them, forgetting all past grudges.

To sum up; what the forests and the mountains have been for the physical stability of the Rumanian people, Dacian idealism has been for its soul, which was almost Christian even before the propagation of the doctrine of Jesus.

V. POLITICAL CONTINUITY

To complete this attempt to explain the remarkable continuity of the Rumanian people, one more important fact deserves to be mentioned. From the Middle Ages to our day the Rumanian State is the only State in the Carpatho-Balkan region which has had an uninterrupted existence.

The Tatars, who had come by the northern shore of the Black Sea, had hardly begun to withdraw from the foothills of the Carpathians when another great Asiatic wave, passing over Asia Minor, swept down on the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. This was the Turkish tide. One after the other, the States of the Balkan peninsula disappeared from the map. Bulgaria, Greece, Albania and Serbia all sank below the horizon of history. Hungary became a *pashalic* (*vilayet*) and even Poland was rent asunder by her neighbours. The Rumanian countries — Muntenia ¹⁾ and Moldavia — alone maintained, as well as might be, their political existence, and preserved their own frontiers and their sovereigns, ground though they were between the millstones of three great empires — Turkey, Russia and Austria. Only after the war of 1877 against the Turks did the Ru-

¹⁾ The Rumanians never employ the name "Wallachia".

manian State escape from the jealous grasp of its neighbours.

Wherein lies the explanation of this extraordinary fact? It is to be found in large part in two local circumstances:



South-eastern Europe at the beginning of the 19th century

a) Urban life having been wiped out in the course of the long barbarian invasions, the population settled about the Carpathians took on an essentially rural character. Feudalism, with its castles and its boroughs, so flourishing in the West, remained almost unknown in the Rumanian

lands. For this reason, the Rumanians were able to place in the field, against the Ottoman armies which had conquered the Balkan peninsula, neither armoured knights nor iron-clad foot-soldiers (armour was expensive and consequently rather rare), but an entirely rural army characterised by the simplicity of its armament¹). At the signal for mobilisation, the militiaman left his plough, taking with him his horse, his buckler, his lance, his bow and even his food-supply.

The army cost little, could be rapidly concentrated and might attain a considerable size. The Venetian Muriano, physician of Stephen the Great, says that the Prince of Moldavia could raise as many as 40,000 cavalrymen and 20,000 infantry. Muntenia, the country between the Danube and the Carpathians could place about an equal number in the field, the geographical conditions and the population being the same in the two provinces. Thus, while the heavily-equipped armies of the West rarely counted more than 10,000 fighting men, the rural army of the Rumanians was well fitted by its nature to resist the large armies of the Ottomans. Once the campaign was ended, the Rumanian soldier returned to his plough.

b) Besides this military organisation — very simple, but adapted to local conditions — the Rumanians had in their critical moments leaders of outstanding ability, as their adversaries themselves have recognised. When the Turks pushed their conquests to the Danube, they were faced by Mircea the Elder (1386—1418), "*princeps inter christia-*

¹) A Polish writer describes the peasant troops as follows: "They are brave fellows, past masters in the handling of lance and buckler, though they are only *simple peasants fresh from the plough*. Their horses are small but lively. They formerly used a sort of two-pointed pike: one point straight and sharp as a stiletto; the other curved like a sickle. Passing swiftly close to the enemy, they would transfix him with the sharpened point, while with the curved blade they would cut at his horse, causing great damage. They have little armour: simple bucklers and pikes without pennons so that the army is dull (inconspicuous) in appearance. Apart from the people of the court, all the others are peasants, having non-upholstered saddles and stirrups of oak wood; but all are valiant in attacking with the pike . . . they carry their food — ewe-cheese and white bread — on the pommel of their saddles as I have seen myself at the battle of Obertin". Martin Bielszky, *Sprawa rycerska 1531*, Arhiva Istorica a României, vol. I, part. 2, p. 158.

nos fortissimus et acerrimus”, as the contemporary Turkish chroniclers described him ¹⁾. On the right bank of the Danube, at Nicopolis and at Varna, the army of Crusaders, gathered from different parts of Europe, was crushed. But at Rovine, on the left bank, Mircea, with his levies, beat Bajazet Ilderim, the “Thunderbolt of War”, as is testified even by foreign writers (Serbs, Bulgarians, Byzantines and Italians) ²⁾. Finally, after five hard campaigns, and receiving no help from the other European States, Mircea made peace, but on condition that he should keep the Danube as his boundary.

After the death of Mircea, it was again a Rumanian — Iancu Corvinus Huniade (1383—1456) — who defended the Danube frontier. He barred the Turks’ way to Belgrade. In ten campaigns, he beat the Turkish army, but in his last two campaigns he was finally vanquished. His fame was so great that the Hungarians elected his son, Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, in spite of their dislike for the family of this foreigner ³⁾.

Subsequently, just when the sword fell from the hands of Iancu Corvinus and when the Turks were preparing to occupy the mouths of the Danube and the Dniester, destiny gave the Rumanians the greatest prince they ever had: Stephen the Great (1457—1504), a typical Renaissance figure with a genius not only for war but also for the organization of the State. During a reign of nearly fifty years, he engaged in thirty-six wars of which he lost but two. Pope Sixtus IV calls him “the athlete of Christendom” and the Polish chroniclers place him in the front rank of his contemporaries ⁴⁾.

¹⁾ Leunclavius, *Historia musulmana Turcorum de monumentis Asorum exscripta* (1591), col. 418.

²⁾ For the Serbian and Bulgarian annals, see D. Onciul, *Mircea cel Bătrân*, 1918, p. 19, note 16.

³⁾ Ulrich Cilley, confidential adviser of Ladislas V, writing to Brancovici, declares “that he (Ladislas) would like to put to death the children of Iancu Hunyady, in order to wipe out that race of Wallachian dogs” (Fessler, IV, p. 847). A son of Hunyady was actually killed.

⁴⁾ Pope Sixtus IV writes to him: *Res tuae contra infideles Turcas communes hostes sapienter et fortiter hactenus gestae tantum claritatis tuo nomini addiderunt, ut in ore omnium sis et consensu omnium plurimum lauderis.* (Romae, XX Martii,

Finally, a century later, the history of Eastern Europe is suddenly lit up by the meteorically brilliant figure of Michael the Brave (1593—1601).

Having vanquished the Turks, the Tatars and the Hungarians, he brought under his sceptre for a moment the whole of the Dacia of Trajan and had himself crowned Prince of all the Rumanians at Alba Iulia, in the centre of the Rumanian land, near the tomb of Iancu Corvinus Hunyady. In the Balkan countries, his victories became the subject of epic poems ¹⁾, and the German historian Bisselius considered that the praises addressed by Christians to the Archangel Michael could be applied to him ²⁾.

All this goes to explain how the Rumanian people, though placed in an exceptionally difficult geographical situation, were nevertheless able to preserve their political existence in spite of all the dangers that threatened them. Toward 1800, in south-eastern Europe, only the Rumanian countries — Moldavia and Muntenia — still survived with their frontiers and their princes; they alone had kept a certain political individuality in the midst of the three archaic monarchies of Turkey, Russia and Austria which encircled them. It was, in fact, the disintegration of these three anachronistic States following upon the World War which made it possible to reinstate the Dacia of Trajan — a restoration, it is true, for which other events which took place in the course of the 19th century, had also paved the way.

VI. ORGANIC UNITY

Assembling in a single picture all that has thus far been set forth, it can be affirmed that there are few regions on our globe where the links which bind man to the soil can be

MCCCCLXXVI, Anno V). Cf. Długosz, *Historia polonica*; Micchow and Wapowski, *Scriptores rerum polonicarum*. It was a contemporary sovereign who gave him his surname "cel Mare" (the Great): "Stephanus ille magnus". (See the letter of King Sigismund, Hurmuzaki, suppl. II, p. 22; I. Ursu, Ștefan cel Mare, 1926).

¹⁾ Emile Legrand, *Recueil de poèmes historiques en grec vulgaire relatifs à la Turquie et aux Principautés Danubiennes*, Paris, 1877; Stavrinou, *Les exploits de Michel le Brave*, pp. 17—127.

²⁾ Ioannis Bisselii, *Aetatis nostrae gestorum eminentium medulla historica, per aliquot septennia digesta...* Ambergae, apud Ioannem Burger, anno. MDCLXXV.

better discerned than in Roumania; and this is true from the very dawn of history—from prehistoric times—down to our own days, with a continuity which is almost unique in history. We may conclude, therefore, that the country and the people of Rumania form an organic whole. On the map, the very form of Rumania gives an impression of harmony; with its rounded outlines, it calls to mind the shape of a medal ¹⁾.

Professor de Martonne also considers that Rumania constitutes at present “an almost ideal setting” ²⁾. A Saxon geographer thinks that the Rumanian people, although it was dispersed until recent years over the territories of four different states, nevertheless shows fewer diversities than any other people of Europe as regards costume, habits of thought, language and way of living ³⁾.

¹⁾ When the Rumanian Geographical Society celebrated the jubilee of its fifty years of existence, it was able to fill the reverse of the commemorative medal with the map of the country.

²⁾ Em. de Martonne, *La Roumanie nouvelle*, 1922, p. 5.

³⁾ H. Wachner, *Europa*. (Sonderdruck aus André-Heiderich-Sieger, *Geographie des Welthandels*, Wien, 1926, p. 424).

THE LAND

I. GEOGRAPHICAL INDIVIDUALITY OF RUMANIA

Since Karl Ritter first began to refer to geographical individuality, this term has been often misused. Nevertheless, there undoubtedly are countries where the physical element blends so perfectly with the human element that they can be considered as genuine „natural units”. Rumania is a case in point.

Cartographers, geologists, morphologists, hydrographers, ethnographers, historians and statesmen have frequently called attention to the organic symmetry of the territory inhabited by the Rumanians; already half a century ago some of them were even prophesying that the Rumanian State would be rounded out to its present limits.

Schrader's Atlas pointed out, over thirty-five years ago, that the old outline of Rumania was contrary to nature,

“Rumania is a country of which the geographical centre, to use the term which we have adopted by analogy with the centre of gravity, bulges outside the territory to which historical events have limited it; in other words, Rumania as it *now* exists gives the impression of a country in a state of unstable geographical equilibrium”¹⁾.

The geographer, examining the Transylvanian plateau and the arc of the Carpathians which surrounds it like the wall of a fortress, was struck by the fragmentary appear-

¹⁾ F. Schrader, F. Prudent et Antoine, *Atlas de géographie moderne*. Paris, 1891, p. 36.

ance of the Rumanian State, the outline of which left the impression of a fracture.

The same impression was likewise shared by the geologist when he saw at the centre a few crystalline nuclei in the Banat, the Apuseni, or Western Mountains, the Meseş Mountains, etc.; then the higher groups of the Rodna, Bistrița and Făgăraș ranges; and on the periphery, long bands of secondary and tertiary strata which surround the bastion of the Carpathians like concentric buttresses.

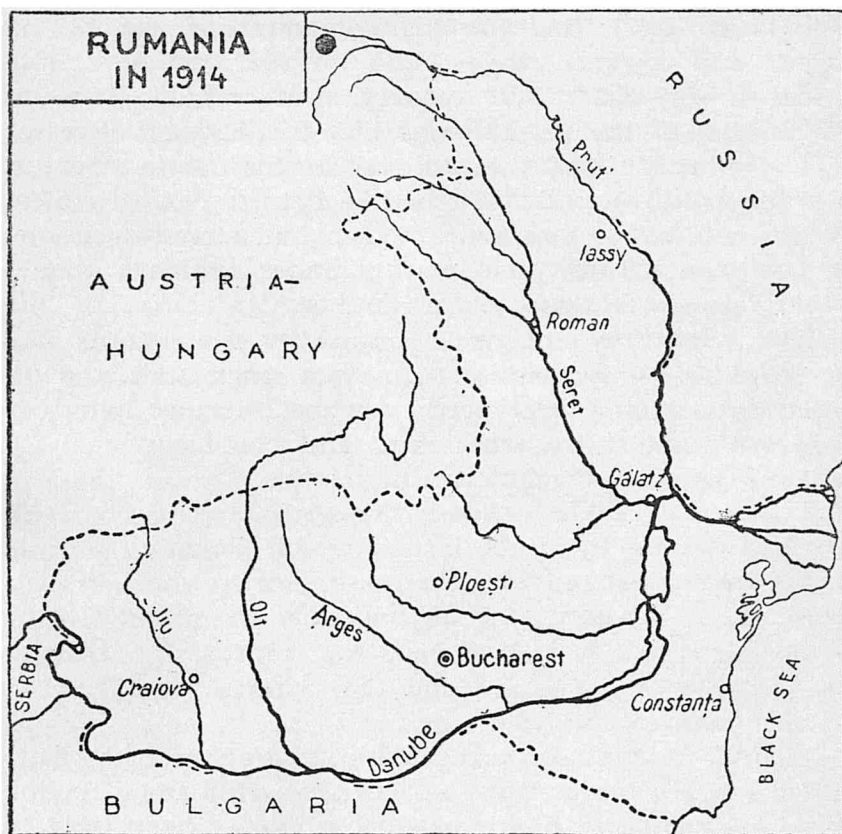
The morphologist, too, had before his eyes a structure as symmetrical as could well be imagined: a central plateau set in a crown of mountains which had already attracted the attention of the ancients (*corona montium*); then a second crown of lesser ranges and a third circle of hills bordered again by plains bounded by the Danube and the Tisza. Yet, this region of forming a single unit, the old Rumanian kingdom embraced only the fragment lying between the Carpathians, the Prut and the Danube and it had only a narrow window on the sea.

The hydrographer reached the same conclusion. If he followed on the map the rivers which radiate from the Transylvanian plateau like the spokes of a wheel, he observed that the sources of all the most important streams — the Jiu, the Olt, the Buzeu, the Trotus, the Bistrița, the Moldova, the Suceava and the Seret — were cut off by the political frontier.

Finally, in the eyes of the bio-geographer, the distribution of the vegetation and of the Rumanian people likewise constituted a symmetrical whole, broken only by the political dislocation. Below the forest-clad summits, he found the flanks of the mountains planted with vineyards; then, in the plain, the grasses of the steppe, which, in the course of time, had given way almost everywhere to cereals.

As to the ethnographer, to come to the final feature of unity to be recorded — he observed the rounded mass of the island of Rumanians surrounded on all sides by peoples speaking other languages and belonging to other races.

A picture composed of so many concordant elements characteristic of a geographical individuality could not but suggest to geographers, to historians and to statesmen the political unification of this corner of the earth.



The frontiers of the Kingdom of Rumania before the world war

Indeed, the historians remembered very well that, in the days of Burebista and of Decebalus, the political frontiers of Dacia included all the territory between the Tisza, the Danube, the Dniester and the sea and even extended beyond those limits. Subsequently, the Dacia of Trajan had preserved the same rounded shape. Later still, after the invasions, the first Rumanian States had not been con-

fined to the region south of the Carpathians but had scaled the mountains and stretched out toward Făgăraș and Amlas. Mircea (1400) and Stephen the Great (1500) possessed lands as far as the middle of the Transylvanian plateau; and Michael the Brave (1600) had succeeded in reconstituting the political unity of the ancient Dacia of Decebalus and of Trajan.

But this was not all. Even the Hungarians — those rather difficult neighbours to the west — had felt how natural a thing the union of all the lands inhabited by Rumanians would be. Prince Gabriel Bethlen (1613–1629), though a Hungarian himself, had planned to reconstruct the Dacia of antiquity by uniting under his own sceptre Transylvania, Moldavia and Muntenia.

This territorial and racial unification seemed to him so desirable that he was at pains to open schools for the Rumanians — the numerically dominant population — and to have the Bible translated into their language ¹⁾.

If such a political conception was already inevitable in the 17th century, it is not surprising to see it become still more definite in the next. Catherine II, Empress of Russia, nourished not only a "Greek project" — the reconstitution of the Eastern Empire with Constantinople as its capital — but also a "Dacian project", namely, the resurrection of ancient Dacia ²⁾. Joseph II, Emperor of Austria, meditated similar projects. The Turks, finally also thought at one time of uniting the countries lying between the Carpathians, the Danube and the Dniester with those having the Carpathians as their centre.

Thus it is not at all surprising that the idea of the political unification of the entire territory occupied by the Rumanians should likewise have forced itself upon states-

¹⁾ I. Ardeleanu, *Istoria diocesei române greco-catolice a Oradiei-Mare*, Blaj, 1888, II, p. 86.

²⁾ She submitted to the Emperor of Austria a secret convention (September 10, 1782) in which she proposed to him "to decide in the first place and forever that there should be an *Independent State* between the three Empires which should be forever maintained independent of the three Monarchies. This State, formerly known by the name of Dacia, etc. . . ."; T. S. Djuvara, *Cent projets de partage de la Turquie*, F. Alcan, 1914, p. 209.

men, even upon statesmen completely detached from any local political preoccupation. In 1868, after a journey in the basin of the lower Danube, Gambetta wrote these significant lines:

"It is the Hungarians who stir up the Rumanian question by the violence of their government. It is the chauvinism of the Magyar race that creates it. Whatever turn the Eastern question may take, it will be necessary to consider Rumania which, in any Eastern war, is in danger either of a Russian invasion, if Austria remains neutral, or of an Austro-Hungarian occupation. The Rumanian question is therefore an essential element in the Eastern question".

In 1875 he expressed himself still more clearly:

"Rumania is on the point of concluding a military alliance with Russia. We should make that our business and should express to these two nations our secret approval of this agreement which is still secret. But who in France concerns himself with foreign policy? Yet it is of vital importance for us to watch Russia in the future and to watch Rumania. I can conceive of a modification of frontiers in Eastern Europe making it possible to unite all the Rumanians in a kingdom of Rumania. By'all the Rumanians', I mean those of Bukovina, of Hungary and even of Serbia as well as of Macedonia" ¹⁾).

From physical facts to ethnographical and political observations, everything points, then, to the geographical individuality of the Rumanian land and the Rumanian State. It has become increasingly clear; testimonies daily more numerous have made it a postulate based on the very nature of the facts. Men of science as well as statesmen have been led to the same conclusion that the term used by the geographer Karl Ritter is properly applicable to Rumania. The Rumanian State has an individual political character resulting from the unity and the symmetry of the Carpathian range and of the hills and plains which surround it to the west and to the east.

¹⁾ Paul Deschanel, *Gambetta*, Paris, 1929, p. 199.

In the following pages, we shall examine how this orographical unity came to be; then how, because of the close ties which bind together the people and the soil, a racial and political unity was formed. If history is nothing but "geography in motion", as Herder said, it will be seen that the land of Rumania, the Rumanian people and the Rumanian State are only links in the same chain, bound together by the causality of natural laws.

II. GENESIS OF THE RUMANIAN LAND

It will help in an understanding of the genesis of the Rumanian land first to examine physical Europe as a whole, choosing as point of vantage the isthmus which separates the Baltic Sea from the Black Sea.

To the west of this isthmus, Europe presents a great variety of orographic forms.

There are, in the first place, numerous plains of all sizes from those of the Po, the middle Danube and the lower Danube to the vast level zone which extends from northern France to Russia. Beside these plains, one finds a multitude of hills and plateaux; mountains completely worn down and young and lofty chains — the Alps, the Carpathians, the Apennines and the chains which encircle the Mediterranean.

In contrast, to the east of the Ponto-Baltic isthmus, the appearance of the earth's crust is as monotonous as possible. Here the archaic crust forms a vast and massive base. The edge of this base is clearly seen in Finland; then it disappears beneath a more recent deposit 200 metres thick in the region of Petrograd, to emerge once more in the Urals and in the neighbourhood of the Black Sea, where the rivers have eaten through the more recent strata. This was not a difficult process of erosion, since the original crust was covered only by a few very thin layers like the leaves of a book lying horizontally one above the other. These stratified sediments (some of them primary,

the others secondary and tertiary) prove that the waters of the sea have advanced and retired several times, but always calmly; nowhere do we find evidence of faulting, of fractures or of folding. Thus, throughout this immense area, there is not a single volcano or a hot spring while earthquakes are practically unknown.

The only remarkable geological event was the coming down from the north of a glacier which covered about two-thirds of this vast and almost motionless region and which, after the melting of the ice, left moraines with all their characteristic forms. But these glacial deposits were subsequently smoothed out by the rivers, the rains and the wind, so that the monotonous character of the region has not been appreciably changed by them.

Thus the great plain of eastern Europe may be regarded as a gigantic shield which, ever since life began on the globe and down to our own day, has remained as a symbol of passivity in comparison with the rest of the planet. "It is perhaps the only known territory which, without passing through long phases of emersion, has proved refractory, from the beginning of the Silurian period to the present time, to movements of folding as well as to those of rupture" ¹⁾. The uniformity and monotony of this region, then, are determined by the history of the earth itself. This characteristic is so striking that Hettner, in his book on Russia, begins by stressing this peculiarity which distinguishes the Russian plain from the other European plains, quite apart from its continental extent. For this reason, in his description of the old Russian Empire he does not include Finland any more than the Vistula basin, considering them, like the Caucasus, as regions foreign to Russia proper ²⁾. Lapparent expresses exactly the same view: "European Russia constitutes in the world an absolutely unique exception" ³⁾.

The appearance of the earth's crust to the west of the Ponto-Baltic isthmus is entirely different. Its great variety

¹⁾ A. de Lapparent, *Leçons de géographie physique*, Paris, 1898, p. 371.

²⁾ A. Hettner, *Das europäische Russland*, Leipzig, 1905, p. 9.

³⁾ A. de Lapparent, *ibid.*, p. 366.

of plastic forms has already been mentioned. But the difference is enormous not only statically, but dynamically as well: the mobility of the earth's crust is as constant and recent to the west of this isthmus as its passivity is total and ancient to the east. This mobility has produced a marvellous variety of forms: on the one hand, hills, plateaux, mountains in all stages of erosion, volcanoes from a few hundred to several thousand metres in height, some of them extinct, others still active and, on the other hand, large and small peninsulas, gulfs — some vast, others narrow as fjords, coasts with straight lines or highly indented, etc.; in brief, a highly diversified whole, such as is hardly to be found in any other part of the world.

Thus the Ponto-Baltic isthmus separates two absolutely different worlds. And Rumania is situated exactly at the boundary between these two worlds. A brief analysis of the different parts which make up the Rumanian land will show that its genesis is intimately related to the line of demarcation which separates these two fundamentally dissimilar regions.

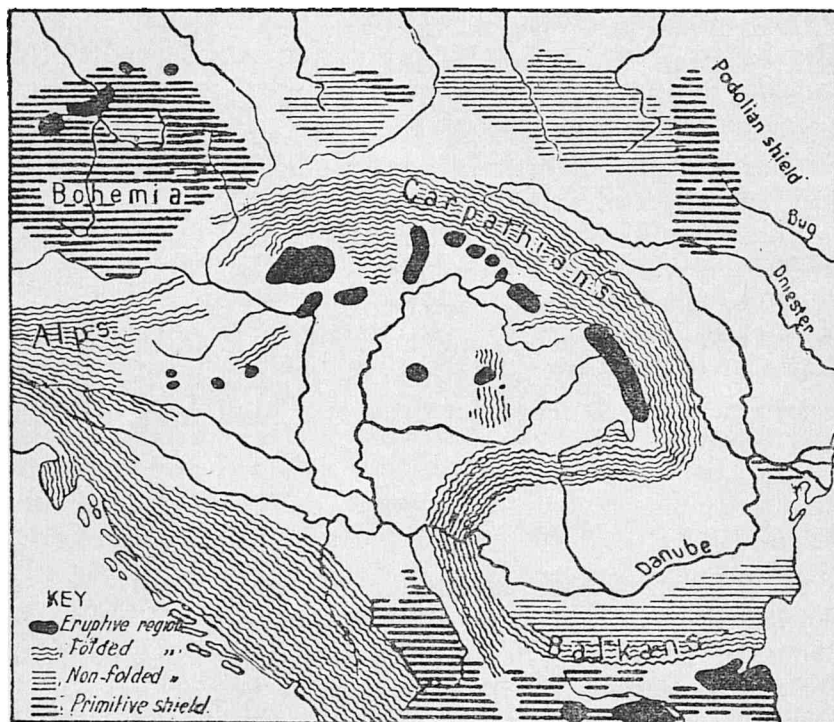
A) THE RUMANIAN CARPATHIAN SYSTEM

In the immediate proximity of the Carpathians, in Podolia, there is a sort of spur which juts out from the great Russian block. The chain of the Carpathians produces here the impression of an uplifted wave beating against the resistance of a pier or a dike. One is involuntarily led to suspect that the uplifting of the Carpathians wave must have been caused by the resistance of this mass.

If one examines on the map the curves formed by the Alps and by the Carpathians, one immediately becomes aware of a connection in the formation of these two groups of mountains.

The crystalline axis of the Alps extends right up to the Carpathians. The continuity was formerly complete, but the middle zone broke up and fell apart into several blocks, some of which then subsided. In the region where the

middle Danube and the Tisza now flow, an immense basin in the shape of a caldron was formed; its crystalline margins are still visible in the Banat, the Apuseni Mountains, in the region between the Crişul Repede and the Someş, and to the west in the crystalline fragments which occur at intervals from Bacony to Matra. This crown of mountains sur-



[The unity of the Carpathians and the heterogeneous formations in the adjoining regions

rounds the bottom of the caldron, but fragments of this crystalline axis are found still farther away in a second crown of ranges.

These are the Făgăraş Mountains in the Southern Carpathians, the Rodna Mountains and then those of the Bistriţa, prolonged by the Tatras, the Lower Carpathians and the Leitha Mountains, which thus form the outer

border of the great basin between the Alps and the Carpathians.

Between these two crowns of mountains there are two smaller depressions: the basin of Transylvania between the mountains of the Banat, the Apuseni Mountains and those of Rodna, the Bistrița and Făgăraș; and the basin of the Raab between Bacony and the Leitha.

This was how the crystalline bridge which formerly extended from the Alps to the bend of the Carpathians broke towards the east and produced basins in which the waters of the sea collected, while fragments which remained standing, but more or less submerged, formed a sort of archipelago.

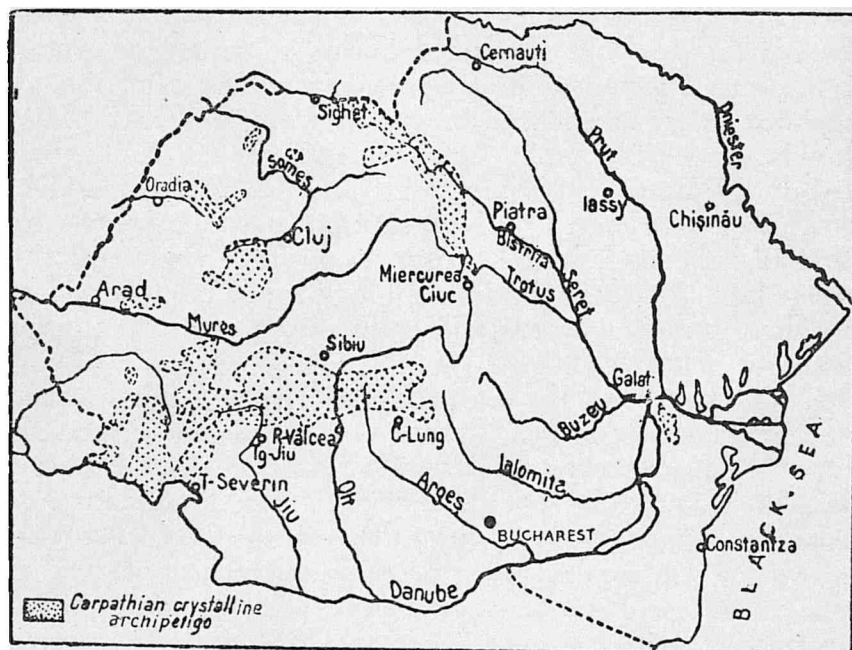
But the bottom of these seas did not remain inactive; it continued to move and to sink. Consequently, the sediments deposited in the geosyncline which separated this archipelago from the Podolian block were compressed as in a vice, forced upwards and compelled to form mountain chains.

Thus were born the Carpathians. The crystalline nuclei and the mesozoic deposits were enveloped and joined together by more recent folds which rose one after the other like defensive walls around a citadel. The architecture of these mountains, then, is due to two facts: the thrust from the west of the great crystalline masses which continued to break down, and the resistance to the east of the Podolian block. But this resistance itself was not entirely passive. Some of the marginal fragments of the Podolian mass, which became dislocated and then submerged, exerted an oblique pressure on the base of the Carpathians, forcing the folds to lean over toward the eastern dike. A new chain of mountains had been formed on the European continent, comprising within a single system the ancient crystalline nuclei.

This work was accomplished over a long series of geological periods.

The assemblage in a single system was achieved by the Carpathians of the flysch which had themselves been form-

ed by the sediments deposited in the geosynclines between the Dacian chains and the eastern block. These strata, caught as in a vice, became folded, the direction of the folds being necessarily parallel to the axis of the geosyncline. We may, say therefore, that not before the Cretaceous-Palaeogenic flysch was the physiognomy of the Carpathians marked out in its main lines.



Crystalline Blocks

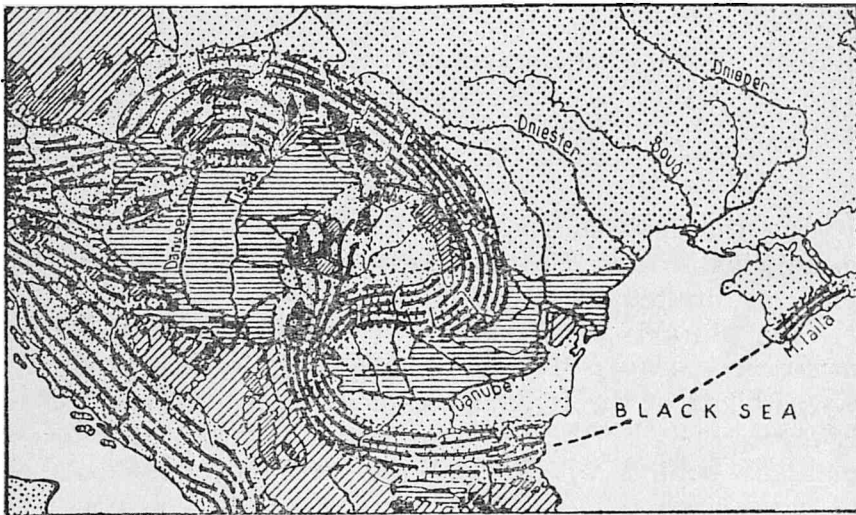
This great orogenic movement gave the European continent a backbone and a unity. Europe was rejuvenated just at the moment when its ancient chains, stretching from Brittany to the Dobrogea, were already showing signs of an early levelling down.

The word "rejuvenated" is not a metaphor. This morphological process was carried out in two different ways:

1. In the first place, the epeirogenic movements uplifted even the old Dacian chains which had been worn down

to the condition of a peneplain ¹⁾. A direct consequence of this uplifting was to intensify the erosive energy of the rivers and to produce a rejuvenation of the relief, a process which, after having passed through several phases, is still going on under our eyes.

2. In the second place, the geosyncline between the Carpathians of the flysch and the eastern block was not filled up rapidly and did not remain stationary; its axis



Continuity of the Alps with the Carpathians

moved steadily eastward under the influence of the faults and of the marginal subsidences of the crystalline block. The waters of the miocene and pliocene seas thus continued to deposit sediment, layer after layer, to the end of the tertiary era. The sediment was again compressed and thus a new series of more and more recent folds formed the sub-Carpathian chains with their hills and their slopes ²⁾. In spite of their recent formation, however, the sub-Car-

¹⁾ E. de Martonne, *Recherches sur l'évolution morphologique des Alpes de Transylvanie*, Paris, 1906; Ludomir Sawicki, *Beiträge zur Morphologie Siebenbürgens*, 1912.

²⁾ L. Mrazec and I. Popescu-Voitești, *Contributions à la connaissance des nappes du flysch carpathique en Roumanie*, Bucarest, 1914.

pathians rose in certain parts as much as a thousand metres above sea-level (Măgura Odobeștilor). This uplifting is still going on; the earthquakes which are very frequent on the line of fracture Focșani-Sulina prove that the orogenic thrust still continues today.

A further sign of youth is the appearance of a long chain of volcanic mountains, the longest in all Europe, along the inner side of the Carpathian arc. It forms a sort of new lining from the bend of the Carpathians to the north of the Tisza in the direction of the Tatra and the Sudetes, almost covering the chain of the eastern Carpathians. The formation of this complex of mountains will be explained below.

CONCLUSION

On the eastern front, the Carpathians are polygenetic mountains produced by a succession of foldings which took place at different periods.

The old axis is marked by crystalline nuclei and a few mesozoic enclaves. The principal chain is formed by the Carpathians of the flysch; the most recently formed chain is represented by the low ranges and hills of the sub-Carpathians behind which rises the still more recent chain of volcanoes.

The most striking feature in the physiognomy of the Carpathians is their curved form. Nowhere else on the surface of the globe can one find mountain ranges with so twisted a general direction. The Carpathians form a reversed S, which is especially distinct if we follow their prolongation beyond the Danube up to the Balkans.

What is the cause of this violent deflection? To answer this question, we must consider yet another morphological factor of great importance.

B) THE HETEROGENEOUS PERIPHERAL REGIONS

Facing the Carpathians there are several heterogeneous tectonic units, separated from the Carpathian chain by fractures.

a) The Podolian block which has already been mentioned is an absolutely stable promontory. Its immobility will be fully demonstrated to anyone taking the trouble to go down into the valley of the Dniester, as deep and narrow in places as a gigantic trench. Here are to be found, from the palaeozoic era to our own day, only perfectly horizontal strata, lying one above the other like the leaves of a book.

This promontory which is foreign to the Carpathians, is bordered by two depressions: to the north, the depression of Volhynia, where one section of the block has settled a little, reaching to the line of the upper Vistula and to that of the Sudetes; and to the south, where the edge of the block has also sunk, namely in the region included between Cernăuți and the Troțuș. This section, to be sure, has not sunk very much, whereas another, between the Troțuș and the Focșani-Tulcea fracture, has dropped down to the level of the Black Sea.

Thus, from the Sudetes, i.e. from the fault of the Vistula, to the Dobrogea, i.e. to the fault of the Danube, the Carpathian massif faces the eastern block. The frontier, i.e. the line of demarcation between the Carpathian folds and the old block, cannot be followed throughout its entire length with sufficient precision, for, as has already been said, some fragments of the block have been submerged to the west, making an oblique thrust against the base of the Carpathians.

b) The horst of the Dobrogea is a Kimmeridgian fragment. Formerly, in the place now occupied by the eastern front of the Carpathians, a chain of mountains extended from the Sudetes to the Black Sea in a south-easterly direction. Of this chain only two fragments — the Sudetes and the Mountains of Macin — remain, worn down to the dimensions of small hills. The whole intermediate section subsided and was occupied, from the beginning of the secondary era, by seas in which were deposited the sediments which were to give birth to the younger chain of the Carpathians.

The direction once taken by this old chain of mountains is still discernible in the arrangement of the Carpathian folds, particularly in the Galician and Moldavian Carpathians, where the parallel ridges follow the same southeasterly direction as the chain which has subsided.

Further remnants still bearing witness to this ancient chain are the conglomerates of green schist which are to be found in the eastern Carpathians and which occur nowhere else except in the hills of the Dobrogea and at Zips¹⁾.

Thus the Dobrogean horst, though limited to the north by the Focșani-Tulcea fracture and to the south by the Pecineaga-Camena fault, is connected with the Carpathians and not with the Balkans, to which it is wholly unrelated. Its rocks, in fact, have served for the building of the Carpathians; more than that, it made way for them by the subsidence of its middle section, which connected it with the Sudetes; and on this same line, as a consequence of the orogenic movement, enormous quantities of lava burst forth, giving birth to the chain of volcanoes which arose behind the Carpathians.

The earthquakes which are frequent in the lower valley of the Siret and in the fracture to the north of the Dobrogea, have no other cause than this subsidence which is still going on ²⁾.

This subsidence necessarily caused the tensions and dislocations of the earth's crust which produce earthquakes; it seems even to be bringing about the formation of new folds ³⁾.

Finally, it is this same formidable subsidence of the Kimmeridgian chain in its main direction that has caused the waters of the upper Tisza to flow toward the north-west in the depression of the Bodrog and the rivers of Mun-

¹⁾ L. Mrazec and I. Popescu-Voitești, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

²⁾ To the north of Nomoloasa, the Siret has laid bare forests buried beneath five metres of diluvian gravel, above which there is also loess and thin layers of black earth.

³⁾ The levantine deposits of Barboși are undulated as though the sediments of the geosyncline between the Carpathians and the Dobrogea were in process of adding a new fold to the sub-Carpathians. „*Buletinul Soc. Geogr. Române*”, 1912, p. 187.

tenia in the Focșani-Galați depression, thus making the rivers of the Rumanian plain deviate northwards.

c) *The pre-Balkan platform*. This unit, foreign to the Carpathians, is the remnant of an old crystalline mass, thrust in like a wedge between the Balkans and the Carpathians. Toward the Danube and toward the Balkans, this platform is bordered by faults. Towards the north, fragments of it have subsided and have exerted pressure against the base of the Carpathians just as the Podolian block has done, making the folds of the Carpathians lean toward the Danube.

If the chain of the Carpathians is now considered as a whole, the causes of its violent twisting will be understood. There are three of them, namely, the concentric pressure exercised by the Podolian block, the Dobrogean horst and the pre-Balkan platform. Between the zone which subsided in the Pannonian basin and in the smaller basin of Transylvania and the zone which was caught as in a vice between the three heterogeneous elements that have been mentioned, the strata were folded and lifted up to form, first, the Carpathians of the flysch, and then the sub-Carpathians. This explains at the same time the asymmetrical character of the chain of the Carpathians, and also the fact that its folds are inclined outwards.

The oldest Carpathians lean upon the back of the middle-period Carpathians, and the latter lean upon the most recent, pushing them toward the heterogeneous masses which rise before them like an obstacle.

The Dacian chains are bounded on the outside by longitudinal fractures and they straddle over the Carpathians of the flysch. The latter are bordered on the outside by other fractures and they rest upon the sub-Carpathians, which, in turn, are bounded by longitudinal fractures thrown backwards against resistance offered by the edges of passive blocks. The process by which they have been formed will not be completely cleared up until measurements with the plummet have revealed for all parts of the region the anomalies in the density of the earth's crust in the Carpathians.

and in the neighbouring regions. "When the terrestrial mass, by contracting and folding, formed the Alps and the Carpathians, at the same time it both rose and sank into its own (magmatic) substratum; it did not behave like an iceberg in the midst of the waters, but, because of its elastic connection with the adjoining parts of the crust (*Vorlandskruste*) and because of the plasticity of the substratum, it drew after itself into the depths the marginal parts of the stable block" ¹⁾.

It still has to be determined, therefore, whether the marginal fragments of the block were swallowed up, helping by their oblique pressure to cause the folding, or whether this folding itself, caused by the movement of the masses seeking equilibrium, according to their density or other circumstances, provoked the rupture of the margins of the passive block and their fall into the depths. In any case, one thing is clear: the genesis of the Carpathians is connected with the resistance of the primitive block, of the Dobrogean horst and of the Balkanic platform.

C) THE ZONE OF FILLING AND OF TRANSITION

The faults which separate the Carpathian system from the heterogeneous masses which encircle it are being gradually obliterated. At the foot of the mountains, the waters of the sea and, later, of the pliocene lakes and, finally, of the rivers, have filled up and levelled off the depressions. In this way there came into existence the vast plains which nowadays encircle the citadel of the Carpathians both in the direction of the Tisza and in that of the Danube and the sea. This chain, the outer parts of which are of such recent formation, has thus gradually become united with the ancient and passive elements which resisted it, owing to the yet more recent formation of the plains and of the

¹⁾ Franz Kossmat, *Die Mediterran-Kettengebirge in ihrer Beziehung zum Gleichgewichtszustande der Erdrinde*. Leipzig, 1921, p. 21.

delta which is still going on before our eyes. The old movements are dying out; this is now a region of filling and of transition — processes which are covering up more and more completely the old scars.

This work of filling is far from being merely superficial. At Giurgiu, fragments of the pre-Balkan platform are to be found below the left bank of the Danube at a very short depth beneath the surface. In the middle of the plain, at Mărculești, the pre-Balkan platform occurs at a depth of 318 metres; at Bucharest there is no sign of it even at 1000 metres.

The most recent stratum — the layer which has covered not only the lake deposits, but also the alluvia carried down by the streams of the Carpathians — is the loess, which sometimes has a depth of 30 metres in the plain, and even reaches, in exceptional cases, a depth of more than 70 m. The loess and other deposits have given Rumania, under the influence of the climate and of the vegetation, a fairly varied soil ¹⁾. But this soil is very different from that which extends eastward from the Dniester ²⁾.

It follows from the foregoing account of the genesis of the Carpathians that, from the standpoint of geology, as from that of morphology and that of the composition of the soil, the Rumanian Carpathians form the last bastion of Europe facing the Russo-Siberian block. Indeed, as long ago as 1912, the map of Banse designated the whole region to the east of Rumania by the name of Greater Siberia (Gross-Sibirien) ³⁾.

¹⁾ Comité international de pédologie, *État de l'étude de la cartographie du sol dans divers pays de l'Europe, de l'Amérique, de l'Afrique, de l'Asie*. Collection de mémoires publiés sous les auspices de l'Institut Géologique de Roumanie. Bucarest, 1924.

²⁾ In a brochure of the Zemstvo of Chișinău, published in 1912, Nobokih, Professor of geology in the University of Kiev, concludes as follows: *The Bessarabian soils* (viz., those of the region between the Prut and the Dniester) differ completely from those of Podolia and of Cherson. Cf. Dr. P. Cazacu, *La Moldavie d'entre le Pruth et le Dniester*, Iassy, p. 68.

³⁾ Ewald Banse, *Petermann's Mitteilungen*, 1912, p. 3.

III. EUROPE'S ASIATIC FRONTIER

The Carpathians with the adjoining regions are the citadel of Europe (*das Bollwerk Europas*)¹⁾.

As long as there existed at the foot of the Carpathians a geosyncline filled with the waters of the tertiary sea, the real frontier between the soil of Europe and the Russo-Siberian mass was this sea which surrounded the Carpathians. When it was filled up by sediment, the latter folded and surrounded with hills the old Carpathian citadel, until the old scars were completely closed. Then, little by little, the diversified region of the Carpathians, rich in volcanoes, earthquakes and hot springs, was welded to the passive mass of the oriental block.

However, the antithesis between these two essentially different regions has not yet completely disappeared today. Certain facts bring this out very clearly.

In the first place, the birth of a chain of mountains is an event in the history of the planet which has very great effects on the climate. It is, therefore, not surprising that the chain of the eastern Carpathians, which follows approximately the direction of the meridian, should have become a climatic frontier between the Russian plain and Europe proper. Geographers know that the beneficent influence of the Gulf Stream extends over our continent up to 25 degrees East longitude; and this meridian passes through the middle of the Carpathian bastion. This coincidence, fortuitous though it is, is explained by deeper causes, of which it is possible to observe the multiple effects.

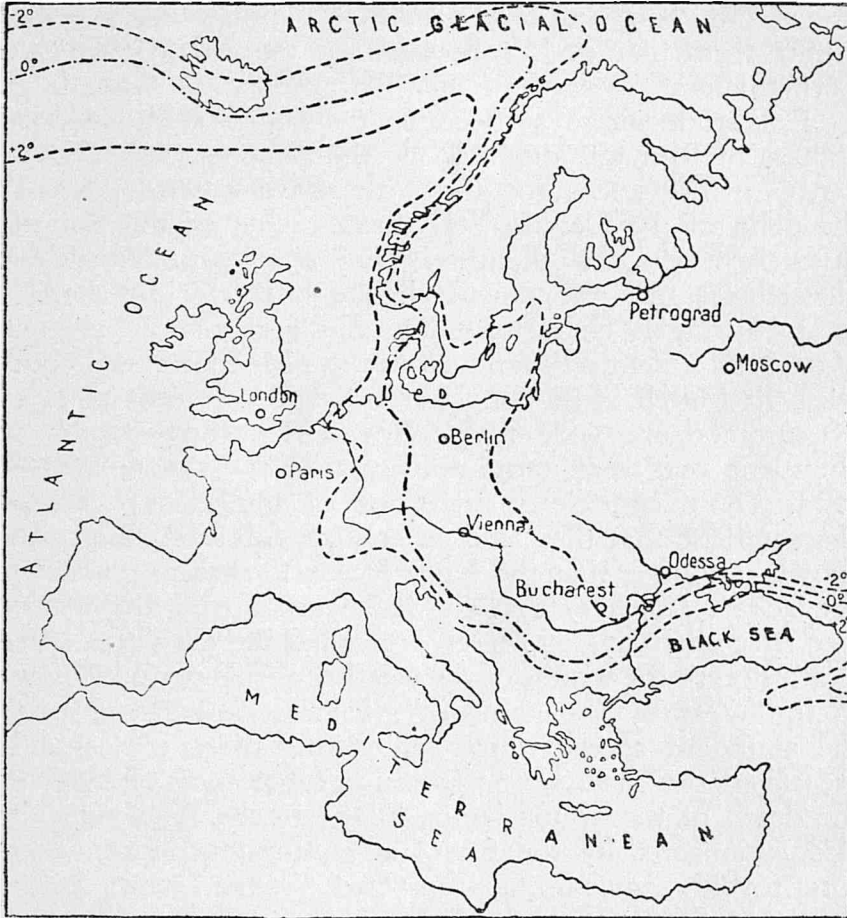
1. CLIMATE

Nothing is more characteristic than the direction of the winter isotherm of 0° C (32° F). From Scandinavia it descends to the lower Danube, avoids the Balkans (as though

¹⁾ *Ibid.*

taking care not to approach the Mediterranean), then stretches eastward, traversing obliquely the Black Sea.

Rumania is traversed in January by the isotherms of 0° , -2° , and -4° C; in other words, it is situated (bet-



Winter isotherms of $+2^{\circ}$, 0° and -2°

ween the positive and negative temperatures) right in a zone of transition, where neither the Mediterranean nor the Gulf Stream can prevent the water from freezing during a few months of the year. It is to be noted that the curve

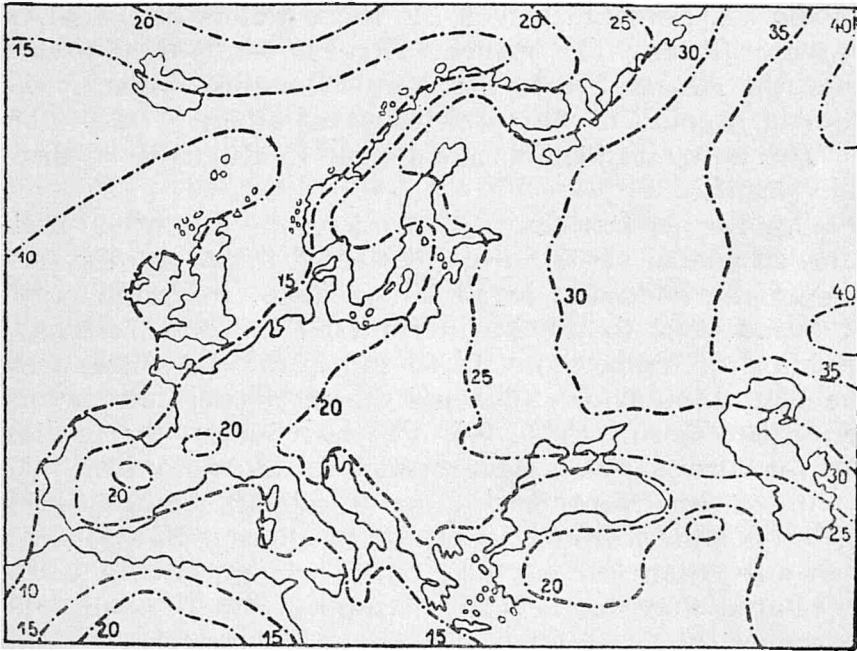
of the isotherm follows the arc of the Carpathians, thus indicating that Rumania occupies exactly the region where the continental climate begins. The plain of the lower Danube, like that of the Vistula, is situated in the zone where the frost lasts from two to three months each year. Thus it is at the Ponto-Baltic isthmus that a climate begins which differs from that of Europe between the Atlantic and the Carpathians.

If latitude alone sufficed to determine a climate, the climate of Rumania ought to be the same as that of Lombardy or Provence; for the 45th parallel passes through the delta of the Danube and through that of the Po, and Bucarest is situated slightly farther south than Bordeaux. Nevertheless, the Rumanian climate is totally different.

a) Spring is characterised in our regions by *variations of temperature* entirely unknown in the Mediterranean countries. In March, days almost as hot and as bright as those of summer are suddenly followed by snow-storms so abundant that they stop railway traffic, as happened in 1923. These capricious variations of temperature are so characteristic that they find an echo in folklore. The spring snows announce that the Fairy Dokia is shaking the seven fur jackets (*cojoace*) that she had worn during the winter. The first nine days of March are called the *old wives' days*, in allusion to the whims of the weather at this period (known in the West by the name of *giboulées de mars*). Finally, the abundant snows which fall during these critical days are called the *snow of the lambs*, because they often cause the death of the young lambs in the flocks. The vines are also endangered by the frost; agricultural tradition therefore forbids uncovering the buried vine stems before the end of March.

b) Summer resembles that of the Mediterranean countries. The capital of Rumania has hot spells with a temperature of 40° C (104° F), like Rome. But even in the heart of summer, sharp changes of temperature are not unknown. (On June 4, 1898, the temperature dropped 14° C (25° F) in 37 minutes).

c) Autumn alone is more equable, though the temperature drops by jerks, in a fashion quite different from the gradual decline which is observed in Lombardy and in Provence. From the month of September to that of October, the mean temperature drops 6°C in Rumania; but from October to November, it drops another 7°C . As the nights, moreover, are clear and calm, the ground gives off its heat so rapidly that one can almost see the leaves



Lines of equal annual ranges of temperature variations

turn yellow and that the appearance of the landscape changes from one day to another. Instead of a gradual, scarcely perceptible transition, as in the countries along the Atlantic, the forests which cover the mountains and hills of the Carpathians, in which the conifers are mingled with deciduous trees, undergo surprising transformations within the space of a few days.

d) Finally, autumn is followed by a severe winter, which is not lacking in contrasts either. There are calm days, sometimes bright, temperate as in northern Italy; but when the east wind begins to howl, the bitter cold and abundant snows give the landscape a completely northern appearance. Communications become impossible except with sleighs, and if the northeast wind (*Criveţul*) keeps on blowing, all the rivers — even the Danube — freeze so hard that the heaviest loads can be carried over them on the ice. Sometimes even the shore waters of the Black Sea are frozen. The ancient Greeks, when they passed from the Aegean Sea to the Pontus Euxinus, spoke of the “Scythian cold” as we speak today of Siberian cold.

The term *transition climate* applied to Rumania is, then, fully justified.

One further fact deserves mention: the line which indicates an annual variation of 15°C (27°F) follows the outline of the continent in all its windings, from the north of Scandinavia to the Mediterranean; the one marking a variation of temperature up to 35°C (63°F) passes near the Ural Mountains, following the meridian; and the intermediate line of 25°C (45°F) which is thus the median line for Europe, passes right through the middle of Rumania.

If we turn from temperature to rainfall, we again meet with this same feature of a transition climate. In the Mediterranean countries, the rains fall in winter; farther north, in Central Europe, they fall in summer; in Rumania, the season of greatest rainfall is the spring. As to the quantity of rainfall, the Carpathian countries likewise occupy an intermediate situation: in western Europe, there is a zone in which rainfall exceeds 2 m. (79 inches); in Rumania, the isohyets indicate from 75 cm. (30 in.) to 50 cm. (20 in.) (or four times less than on the shores of the Atlantic); on the coast of the Caspian Sea, finally, the rainfall amounts to only 8 cm. (3 in.), or eight times less. Rumania thus occupies an intermediate position between the arid region of the Uralo-Caspian steppes and the well-watered coasts of the Atlantic.

Finally, the wind system is characterised by the Etesian currents, common in the Mediterranean regions (in particular in the eastern basin), which are felt as far north as the mouths of the Danube ¹⁾. For a traveller going from the South to the North, Rumania lies on the frontiers of the Mediterranean region.

For a traveller going from the West to the East, Rumania is again a frontier country, with regard to the direction of the winds. The wind which blows the most frequently is the north-east wind called the *Criveţ*, usually moist (accompanied in winter by snow, in summer by abundant rains). But there are also contrary winds which come from the Adriatic chain; one of them (the *Coşava*) is cold and very violent and blows for several days on end, somewhat resembling the *bora*. It is a curious fact that the east wind sometimes prevails as far as the Carpathians without passing them, while the west wind blows on the other side of the mountains; in the centre is a calm region, a neutral zone. The line of separation between the winds from the east, which are the most frequent, and those which blow from the west passes exactly along the limit of the steppe, between the Argeş and the Olt. In this zone, the east wind, the *Criveţ*, and the west wind, the *Austrul*, have approximately equal frequencies (208⁰/₀₀ and 204⁰/₀₀) ²⁾.

It may be stated, then, that Rumania, as regards temperature, rainfall and winds, is a climatic border land, a zone of transition between the continental climate of Russia and the temperate climate of central Europe. It is thus the meeting-place of four varieties of climate: in the south, a *Mediterranean influence* is felt (at some points in this region there are chestnut trees, and the vine survives the winter without being buried); in the north, in the Moldavian Carpathians, the climate is not unlike that of the *Baltic*; to the west, toward the Tisza, the climate of the

¹⁾ W. R. Eckardt, *Klimatologische Sonderfragen: Die Frage der Etesien im östlichen Mittelmeer und Vorderasien*, P. Mitt., 1923, p. 109.

²⁾ E. Rick, *Climatografia câmpiei dintre Olt şi Argeş*. Academia Română, *Memoarele Secţiunii Ştiinţifice*, seria III, t. II, pp. 34–65.

Pannonian steppe predominates; while to the east appears with sufficient clearness the *extreme continental climate*. These variations of climate are the necessary result of the situation of the Carpathian mountain system, whose different faces feel the influence of the adjoining zones. Instead of considering this climate, then, as *Danubian* (which would suggest a uniform climate, common to the whole basin of the river from the Black Sea to the Black Forest), it would perhaps be more natural to give it the name of *Dacian*, since it is particularly determined by the situation and dimensions of the bastion of the Carpathians, entirely comprised within the frontiers of ancient Dacia.

If anyone still doubts that the climatic limit between Europe and Asia passes through Rumania, further arguments may carry conviction. As regards temperature, there are observed in Rumania, near the 25th meridian of East longitude, both maxima (of a Mediterranean type) and minima (of a continental type). Here also occurs, in the month of June, the maximum precipitation (continental character), but there are also abundant autumn rains (Mediterranean character).

2. HYDROGRAPHY

The water-courses of Rumania can also be described as transitional in type:

1. By their dimensions: the rivers to the west of the Ponto-Baltic isthmus are very different from those to the east of the Carpathians.

The rivers of Europe proper are relatively small. The earth's crust being folded in some places and broken or sunken in others, all the river basins here are rather limited in size. In any case, they are never very long; nowhere is there space enough between the mountains and the sea for the development of a river with many tributaries. (The Rhine, which is the largest river in western Europe, is only 1326 km. (823 miles) in length; the Elbe, the Loire and the Tagus are about as long as the Rhine, but all the other rivers are less than 1000 km. (620 miles long). On the

other hand, the rivers which flow in the eastern plain have plenty of room in which to develop. The Volga (3750 km. = 2325 miles) resembles the rivers of Siberia. The Dniester is more than 2000 km. (1340 miles) in length, and the Don, the Dvina and the Petchora are only slightly shorter.

The Carpathian rivers are intermediate in size. The Dniester (1370 km. = 850 miles) and the Tisza (1360 km. = 844 miles) are longer than the Rhine, while the Mureş, the Prut, the Olt and the Siret are about the same size as the rivers of central and western Europe. It is significant, moreover, that the Dniester (which marks the boundary between Rumania and Russia) is the last river which has its source in the Carpathians. All the others, until the Urals are reached, rise in the plain and receive only tributaries from the plain. Thus the Dniester and the Vistula, which originate in the Carpathians, receive the waters of the Ponto-Baltic isthmus and pour them respectively into the Black and the Baltic Seas, are the last rivers fed by tributaries from the European continent proper.

2. A further difference relates to the behaviour of these rivers. Those of the Russo-Siberian plain disappear in winter beneath ice and snow; some of them even freeze up completely. When spring comes, the thaw produces huge floods. In summer, on the contrary, the water is very low in the steppe. The appearance of a river changes in the course of the year so radically that it does not seem like the same river.

The western rivers, on the contrary, follow a regular rhythm: fed by rains at all seasons, they are always well-filled and they rarely freeze.

The rivers of Rumania display these different characteristics because of the climatic regions on which they depend: issuing from the Carpathians and joining the Danube in its lower course, they present great contrasts according to the season. In winter, they freeze almost completely, like the rivers of Russia. In the spring, the thaw sometimes takes place very suddenly. The breaking up

of the ice in the Danube sometimes produces ice-jams which cause floods that are real catastrophes. Then, during the summer, the drought lowers their water-level so that some of them disappear completely, a fact which recalls the behaviour of the Mediterranean streams.

Thus the Rumanian streams also represent transitional types. Anyone setting out from the Carpathians and travelling eastward will at once observe the change that takes place. The Siret is a Carpathian river by its régime, and, if its bed were not too steeply inclined, it might be a marvellous navigable waterway, for its tributaries from the Carpathians bring it plenty of water (especially the Moldova and the Bistrița, which carry off the waters of a vast forest-clad region). But, on reaching the Prut, we at once observe that we are nearing the steppe climate. The number of tributaries diminishes suddenly and their flow is insignificant. Finally, the Dniester, which is fed almost exclusively by the waters of the Carpathians and which receives almost no water from the steppe, gives the impression of a trunk without branches; for it may truly be said that this river has many more tributaries on the map than in reality. Its slow course already has the appearance which is characteristic of the rivers of the eastern plain.

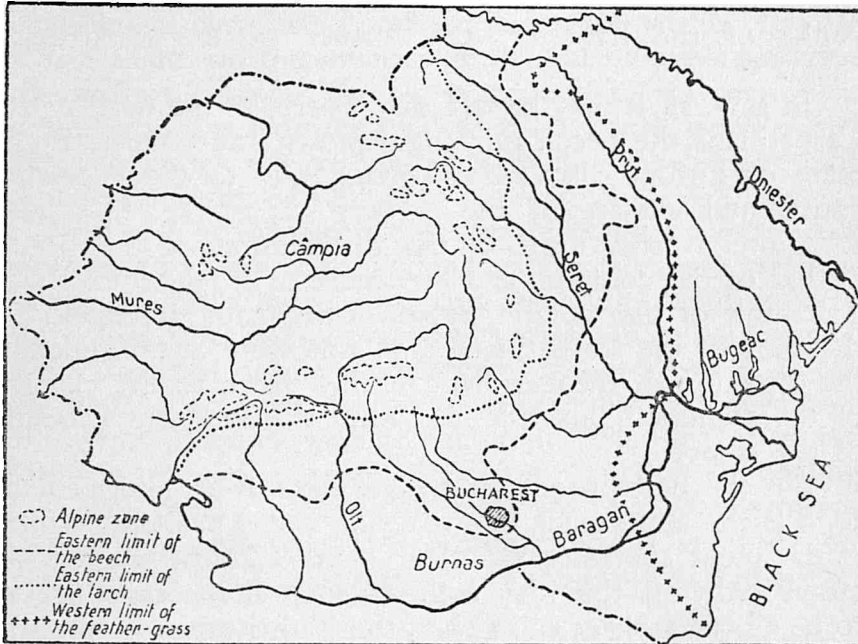
3. VEGETATION

No one who looks at the map of vegetation can doubt that Europe ends at the foot of the Carpathians.

In truth, the 0° C isotherm and the other climatic lines (showing humidity, atmospheric pressure, etc.) which pass through Rumania are in the last analysis only abstractions, since they express an average based on a few figures. Whatever their value may be, it is probable that all these lines (isotherms, isobars, isohyets, isonephs, isonotids) will be modified as the number of meteorological stations grows and as the period of observations lengthens. In the meantime, vegetation is a marvellous recorder of all the factors of climate. The distribution of vegetation is, therefore, the

most important criterion to measure whether Rumania is or is not situated in the zone of transition between Europe and Asia.

The thing that strikes us first is the extent of the zone occupied by the beech (*fagus silvatica*). Among all the European forest species, the beech is the tree which requires the longest period of vegetal activity (it needs at least five



Limits of the beech, the larch and the feather-grass

months to bring its buds to maturity). It fears both cold and drought. In the spring, its large and delicate leaves are seriously endangered whenever the temperature falls below 0° C. The return of the frost in April and May burns the beech plantations and turns their leaves brown. The drought of the steppe has the same effect on their leaves. Consequently, the beech has as its limit the line of the Carpathians, and its frontier withdraws like a gulf along the arc of the Carpathians and the Balkans, in order to escape the drought of the steppe.

We may recall in this connection that the beech fears not only the withering heat of the steppe, but also soils impregnated with salts. It needs a completely washed soil. In consequence, it ventures away from the Carpathians only in regions where the rains are relatively abundant: on the hills of Oltenia; in the Vlasia (basin of the Argeş), where it descends toward the plain; and in the Codru, where it prolongs, from the middle of Moldavia to the banks of the Dniester, the forests of the Carpathian chain.

In general, it may be said that where, at the foot of the Carpathians, the beech no longer grows, the temperate climate of Europe also ceases, giving way to the excessive continental climate of the eastern steppe.

Quite as significant as the distribution of the beech is that of the conifers, and especially of the *picea excelsa*. The limit of this conifer passes down from the north to the foot of the Carpathians and, following approximately the direction of the meridian, reaches down to the vicinity of the Danube. This tree also fears the heat and drought of the steppe.

But the best proof that we are here in an intermediate zone is the appearance of the *colilia* (*stipa pennata*) which is the most characteristic plant of the Pontic steppe. It grows only on thin dry soil. As soon as the earth begins to be a little moister and richer, the feather-grass disappears. Because of its ashy colour and its perpetual movement, this plant gives at a distance the impression of moving sand¹⁾.

We have here, then, a three-fold frontier: that of the beech, that of the larch, and that of the feather-grass, the limits of which meet to the east of the Carpathians to form a "triplex confinium", which gives palpable proof that the chain of the Carpathians separates two distinct worlds.

¹⁾ P. Enculescu, *Zonele de vegetație lemnoasă din România în raport cu condițiunile oro-hidrografice, climatice de sol și subsol*, București, 1924, p. 115. A. F. W. Schimper, *Pflanzen-Geographie auf physiologischer Grundlage*, 1898, p. 639.

In confirmation of these statements, yet another example may be offered, that of the vine. Looking from the west, the northern limit of the vine descends from the Rhine to the Carpathians and then bends to the south upon reaching the valley of the Dniester, when it passes into the Crimea, so that the last European vineyard to the east is a Rumanian vineyard. This same tendency to withdraw toward the south can be observed in the case of the Mediterranean plants. The chestnut (*castanea vesca*) appears at Baia Mare, on the western limit of the Apuseni Mountains and of Oltenia. The fig (*ficus carica*) can bear fruit as the far as line from Giurgiu to Balcic; and the vine survives the winter without burial from the slopes of Oltenia to the shores at Balcic.

Finally, as a last and conclusive argument to prove that we are here in the zone of demarcation between Asia and Europe, we may note — the case is unique in Europe — that a few Siberian species have found refuge as far west as the summits of the Carpathians, which shows that the east wind, the Criveț, for all its power, has not been able to exert its influence beyond this limit. It is for this reason that one of the greatest authorities on the Carpathian vegetation rightly affirms that the chain of the Carpathians marks the last barrier at which a multitude of species come to a stop in their propagation toward the east and north-east ¹⁾).

The *fauna* attests the same fact. We shall give but a single example in support of that statement. The camel, one of the most characteristic animals of Central Asia, has reached the limit of its westward extension precisely at the mouths of the Danube. The Tatars employed it in the Dobrogea until recent times as a beast of burden. Cantemir informs us that in the steppe of the Bugeac wild horses still wandered two hundred years ago, and that the Tatars hunted them, as they still do in Mongolia.

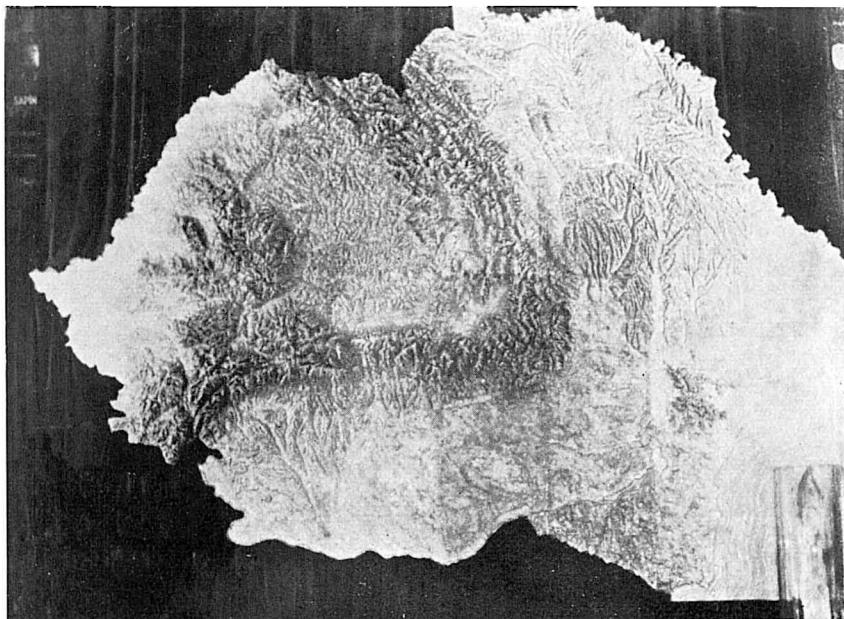
¹⁾ F. Pax, *Grundzüge. Die Pflanzen-Verbreitung in den Karpathen*. Leipzig, 1898, pp. 181, 183.

So many conclusive pieces of evidence leave no possible doubt that the Carpathians constitute toward the east not only an orographic frontier, but also a climatic, hydrographic and biogeographic frontier. We might even add, to complete this demonstration, a further element — an ethnographic frontier. For the Carpathian mountain system was the bastion against which almost all the Asiatic invasions struck: Huns, Avars, Bulgars, Hungarians, Petchenegs, Cumans and Tatars. All those who passed to the westward of the meridian of the Carpathians were wiped out or absorbed. Only a few Tatars have survived, scattered in a few villages in the Dobrogea, as remnants of the Asiatic invasions.

CONCLUSION

From the standpoint of physical geography as well as from that of human geography, the Carpathians with the regions which depend upon them form the true frontier between Europe and Asia. The recent attempts of the geographers to divide the earth's surface into "natural regions" gave us, not so long ago, a map on which was presented as a unit a Greater Siberia (*Gross-Sibirien*), stretching from the Ponto-Baltic isthmus to Behring's Strait. This delimitation is confirmed by the work of the Russian scientists. Nobokih points out that the composition of the soil to the west of the Dniester differs completely from that of the soil of the Russian provinces. And the soil, like the vegetation, is a reflex effect of the climate.

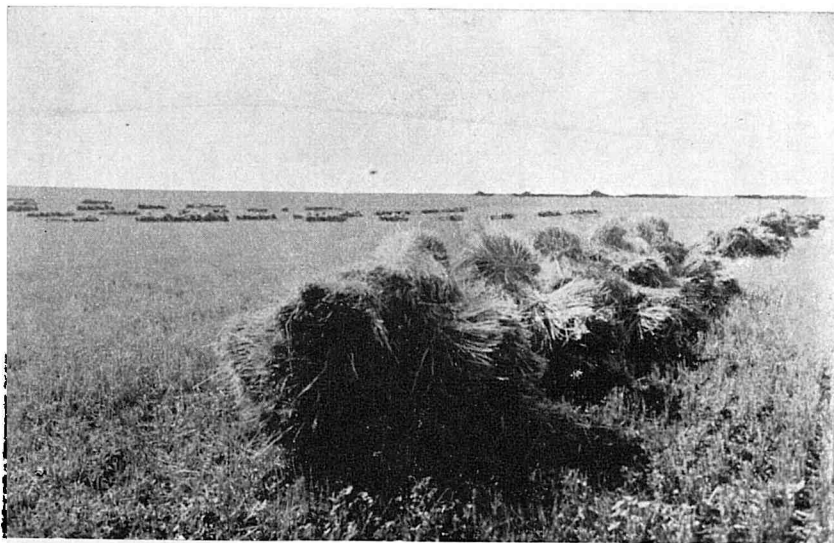
Thus, having considered first the structure of the earth's crust, then the orographic and hydrographic formation of the country, and finally the characteristics of the vegetation, of the fauna, and of human geography, we are in a position to affirm that the Carpathians and their dependencies form the true frontier of Europe toward the east.



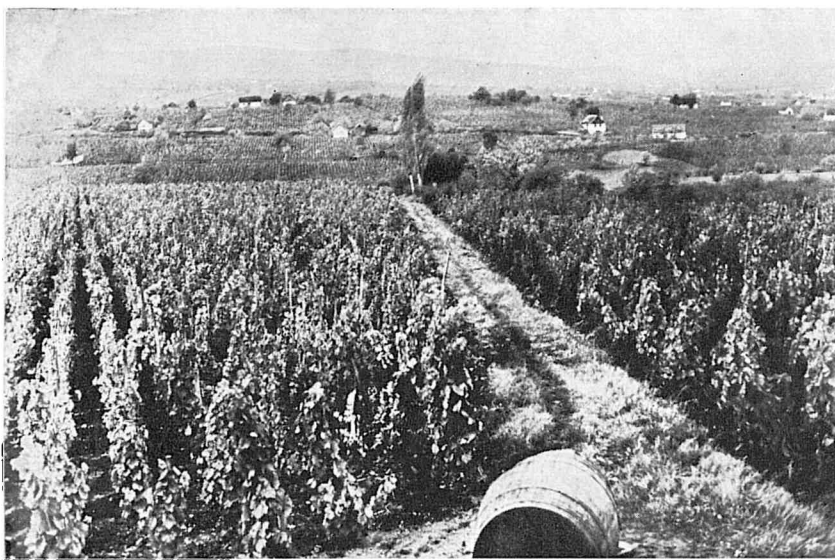
Rumania today



1. Mountains in Rumania



2. Plains in Rumania



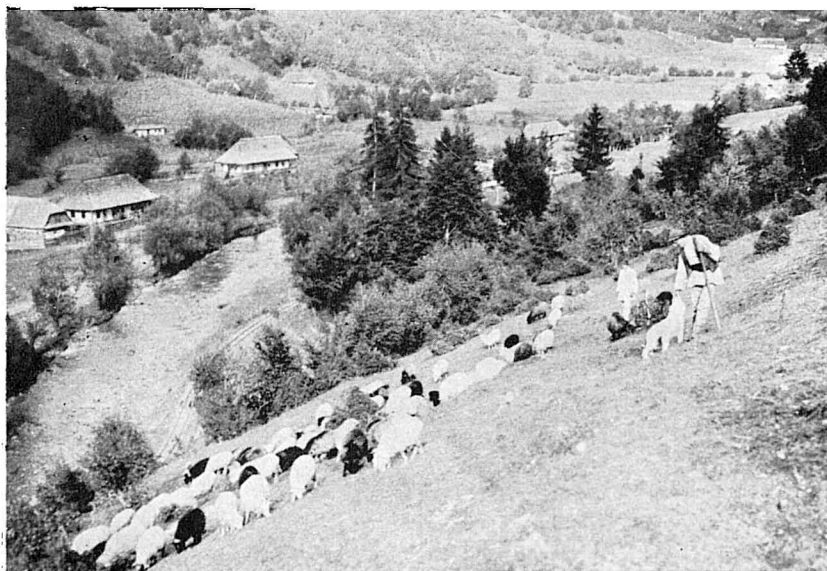
3. Hills in Rumania



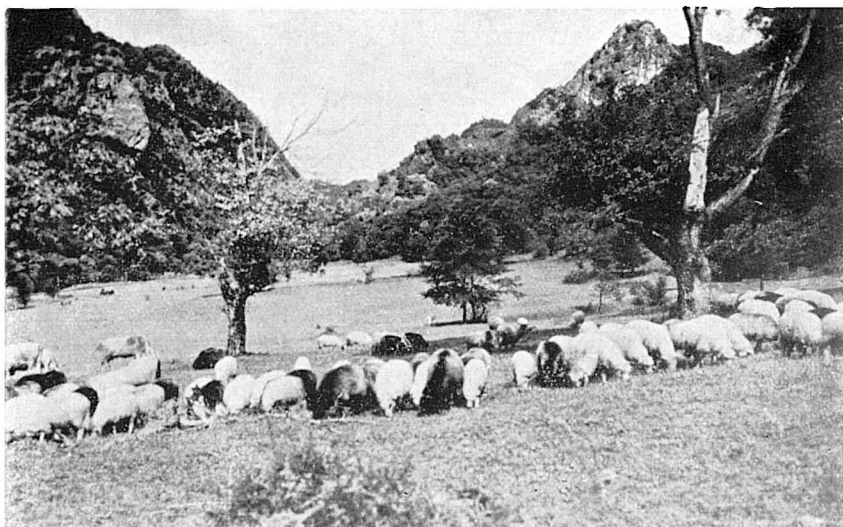
4. Sea-coast in Rumania



1. Rumanian pastoral life in the Făgăraș Mountains



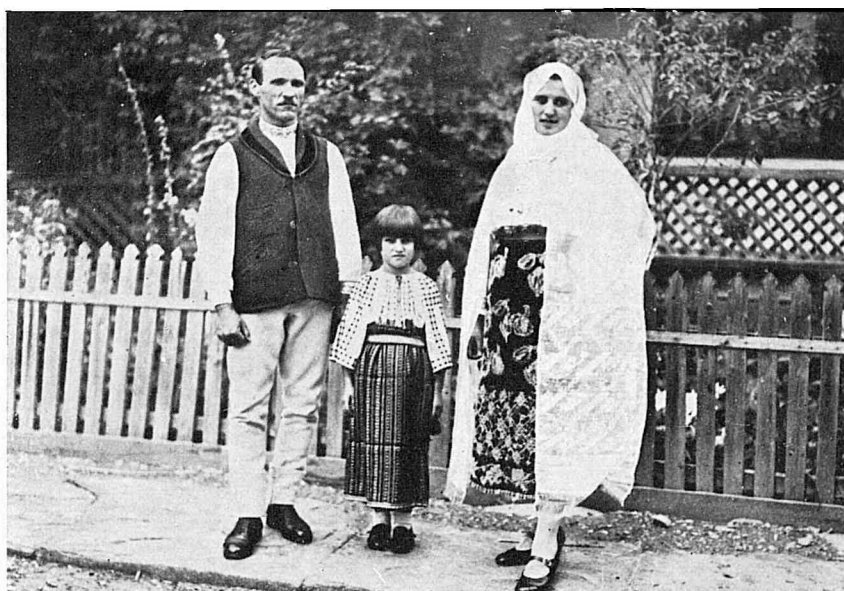
2. Rumanian pastoral life in the Sibiu Mountains



3. Rumanian pastoral life in the Sebeș Mountains



4. Rumanian pastoral life in the Apuseni Mountains



1. Peasant costumes in Muntenia



2. Peasant costumes in Transylvania



3. Peasant costumes in Transylvania



4. Peasant costumes in Transylvania



5. Peasant costume in Bukovina



6. Peasant costume in Moldavia



7. Peasant costume in Northern Transylvania



8. Peasant costumes in Transylvania

THE PEOPLE

I. GENESIS OF THE RUMANIAN PEOPLE

We have already called attention to the characteristic fact that the inhabitants of Rumania know of no earlier homeland than that which they still occupy to-day ¹⁾. But this does not mean that, in the course of the centuries, no foreign elements have been added to the original race. We are able to distinguish fairly clearly, in the Carpathians as in other regions of Europe, several ethnic elements.

1. *The autochthonous element.* At the basis, we find the population which is designated by the generic name of Thracians. To attempt to define the anthropological type of the oldest Carpathian population would be premature, first for want of sufficient material, and, secondly, because of the many changes which have taken place here, not only in the pre-historic period, but especially in historic times. Two thousand years ago, Strabo was convinced that any attempt to determine the limit between the Thracian peoples would be in vain, for wars and especially the Roman conquest had already produced important dislocations ²⁾. It is manifest, however, that, in the mountains and wooded hills to the north of the Danube, the stability of the population has been somewhat greater than to the south of the river, for the invasions took by preference the direction of the Mediterranean countries. The Carpathian region has therefore been better able to preserve the autochthonous element. The cranial measurements, in fact, show a greater

¹⁾ See above, p. 3.

²⁾ Strabo, VII, 7.

degree of brachycephaly in the mountains than in the plains surrounding the mountain system; and the anthropologist who has made the most recent studies in these regions reaches the conclusion that "the present inhabitants may be considered as the representatives of the race known in antiquity as Getae and Dacians" ¹⁾).

2. *Foreign elements.* Other racial elements were added, in course of time, to the old Thracian stock, in particular the Celtic element. From the third century B.C. (280), large masses of Celts migrated into the lower valley of the Danube. Polybius mentions groups scattered as far as Asia Minor, remarkable especially as warriors and as mercenaries. Their settlements extended as far as the mouths of the Danube, as is proved by the name *Noviodunum*, to-day Isacea. Strabo tells us that the *Boii*, the *Scordisci*, and the *Taurisci* were Celtic in race and that many of them were Dacianised in consequence of a long life in common with the Dacians ²⁾).

The expansion of the Celts in the basin of the Danube at this period was entirely natural. Coming from the inhospitable regions between the Rhine and the Elbe, they must have considered any movement which brought them nearer the Atlantic or the Mediterranean as a step in the direction of an easier existence. Hence they subdued Gaul shortly after the foundation of Marseilles by the Greeks, then advanced into the Iberian Peninsula (the Celtiberians) and toward Italy (the Allobroges), and at last poured into the East as far as Delphi and Asia Minor ³⁾).

Had not their gods promised them all the land to which the flight of birds or the movement of the clouds should lead them? The easiest way which offered for this conquest of the world was the route to the southeast, which follows the Danube, the largest river of Europe. Thus the migration of the Celts toward Dacia was entirely natural. It is fair to add that, in this movement which involved all Eu-

¹⁾ E. Pittard, *Les races et l'histoire*, Paris, 1924, p. 348.

²⁾ Strabo, II, 44, 51.

³⁾ C. Jullian, *De la Gaule à la France*, 1922, pp. 73, 74, 125.

rope, the lively temperament of the Celts played a part, and also the flourishing beginnings of their iron industry.

Equally natural was the descent of the Germanic peoples from countries having a harsh climate to the lands of the south. The Bastarni reached as far as the Danube at a very early period, and took up their abode in the midst of the mass of the Thracian peoples. The frequent wars of these invaders with the Getae clearly prove that the thrust from the direction of the Baltic was felt with increasing intensity on what is now Rumanian territory. About every thirty years (i.e., with each new generation), a part of the Germanic tribes set out for the south ¹⁾. The growth of the population in these inhospitable countries of northern Europe forced them to do so; and the movement toward the south was further suggested to them by their commercial relations in connection with the amber trade with the southern countries ²⁾.

Thus, in addition to the ancient "Getic" element, as the Greeks called it, or "Dacian", as the Romans called it, the ethnographer must make allowance, in the Carpathian countries, for certain Celtic and Germanic infiltrations. The most important of these was the Celtic, as is attested by place-names. But that of the Germans cannot be entirely neglected. In the time of the Punic Wars, the Dardani (living near the sources of the Vardar and of the Morava) called on the Romans for help against the northern invaders. The number of these foreign elements was certainly not negligible. One fact proves it: the "Peucini" (a branch of the Bastarni), settled near the mouths of the Danube, maintained themselves for several centuries in that region, until Probus (280 A.D.) transferred these tenacious foreigners to the right bank of the Danube, where they finally blended with the Roman population of the peninsula.

Other racial elements which apparently should have been in a position to contribute to the formation of the

¹⁾ A. Meitzen, *Siedelung und Agrarwesen der Westgermanen und Ostgermanen, der Kelten, Römer, Finnen und Slaven*, I, 386, Berlin, 1895.

²⁾ Jullian, *op. cit.*, pp. 69, 70.

people of the Carpathians were the Ponto-Scythian populations, viz. the Greeks, settled along the shores of the Euxine, and the nomads of the steppe to the north of that sea. But their way of living excluded any considerable mingling with the ethnic stock of the Carpathians. The Greeks, primarily seafarers, kept close to the shores of the sea. They did not seek to penetrate into the centre of the Balkan peninsula, much less into the Carpathians, but merely occupied a few cities on the Black Sea coast. As to the nomads known as Scythians, they remained and continued to remain far from the mountains, where conditions of existence were completely different from those of their steppe.

The antagonism between these two types of population appears in the earliest pages of the history of Rumania. When Darius Hystaspes led his army against the Scythians, the latter asked help of the people of the mountains and sought to take refuge in the spurs of the Carpathians. But the mountain folk repulsed them and forced them to retreat far into the steppe ¹⁾.

Greek and even Scythian objects are found, it is true, in the soil of Dacia. But this in no way detracts from our explanation. The presence of such objects — Greek vases, coins, etc. — does not necessarily imply an infiltration of settlers, and may well be explained by commercial dealings.

Thus, at the beginning of the Christian era, the Dacian people still formed an ethnic unit, not only quite numerous, but fairly homogeneous and quite distinct from its neighbours. The saying of Herodotus, that if the Thracians were united they would constitute one of the greatest of political powers, was at this moment almost realised. Burebista was able to raise armies of 200,000 men. Strabo also confirms the fact that the Dacians were a great people. The foreign elements, then, had been almost completely absorbed and no longer played any part in the history of Dacia.

3. *The Roman conquest and colonisation.* The really important ethnographic event for the future of the popu-

¹⁾ Herodotus, IV, 125.

lation of the Carpathians was the infiltration of the Romans, followed by the military conquest and the colonisation of a part of Dacia.

The arrival of the Romans in the Carpathians determined here, as in Iberia and Gaul, a considerable change in the ethnic character of the region. The penetration of the country by the Romans had begun long before the time of Trajan. Just as the streams which descend the Alps and the Carpathians flow toward the Danube, so the Romanised population spread from the Adriatic and the Alps toward the East, and commerce developed in the same direction ¹⁾. Under Augustus, Moesia and Pannonia became provinces of the Empire; the legions extended from the line of the Rhine to the line of the Danube, of which they occupied the right bank. But Roman rule soon established citadels and entrenchments on the left bank as well, so that Trajan merely completed the work of infiltration when he obtained the submission of the mountain country and of the Transylvanian plateau, where the power of the Dacians had its centre.

The Dacian wars of Trajan, then, are merely the epilogue of a work which had been going on for a long time. There is no other way of explaining how, immediately after the conquest, Dacia appears as the most flourishing province of the Empire (*Dacia felix*). The conquest, however paradoxical this may seem, did not weaken Dacia, but led to its development: on the vigorous Dacian stock was grafted the Roman element which, by its administrative, military and economic technique, dominated all the Mediterranean countries.

It was in this way that the fusion of two civilisations and of two cultures was brought about here. The Dacians had a civilisation quite as old as that of the Romans. The culti-

¹⁾ Thanks to the efforts of the Romans, the Alps were eventually crossed by 18 roads capable of carrying wheeled traffic, not to mention a large number of paths for horsemen and pedestrians. In the eastern Alps, the iron industry in particular played a part in concentrating the population and in intensifying its activity. Objects made in the Alps were sold as far away as Dacia. E. Speck, *Handelsgeschichte des Altertums*. Leipzig, 1905, III, 798, 800.

vation of cereals and of the vine, sheep-rearing and mining had been practised by them for many centuries. On the spiritual side, their belief in a single God and in the immortality of the soul bore witness to a remarkable intellectual and moral development.

When the conflict had ended in the destruction of Dacian independence and in the Roman colonisation, there were immediately available, in this border country of Europe, all the elements necessary to constitute a "border people" capable of filling this difficult rôle. The large mass of natives had been joined by a multitude of colonists who, being expert in the working of the soil (and especially of the subsoil), and guided by the organizing genius of the Romans, gave the new province a progressive impulse unique in the annals of Europe.

The conquest and the colonisation are thus decisive factors in the history of the people of the Carpathians.

Some writers, more attentive to the facts of political history than to those of ethnography, regard the passage of the Romans north of the Danube as an accident or even as an error. In the eyes of the geographer and of the ethnographer, the extension of the Empire into the Carpathians and the Roman penetration of Dacia appear, on the contrary, as an inevitable necessity. From the time of Tiberius, the Latin tongue was spoken in Pannonia, in consequence of commercial relations. Again, the transformation of Moesia and Pannonia into Roman provinces made of Dacia a wedge driven into the flank of the Empire. The frontiers of the latter could not be successfully defended along the Danube as long as the citadel of the Carpathians remained in the possession of a people as unyielding and powerful as the Dacians. The conquest of Dacia became an absolute necessity.

It is true that the Romans had thought at one time of stopping at the Danube, creating on the long frontier from the Rhine to the Danube a line of defence, a *limes*. The line of entrenchments and of forts which was constructed between Axiopolis (to the south of Cernavoda) and Tomis (Constanța), seems to have been intended as a rectification

and shortening of the Danubian frontier. But the Romans soon perceived that the Transylvanian plateau was a constant threat to this river frontier. Decebalus, the master of this natural citadel, had relations also, not only with the *Iazyges* (who had migrated from Lake Maeotis into the Pannonian plain), but also to the north with the Suevi (between the Elbe and the Oder), and to the east with the Bastarni, the Sarmatians and even the Parthians. The Dacian kingdom occupied the centre of the front formed by the adversaries of Rome, reaching from the North Sea to the mouth of the Euphrates. Trajan personally, and also other Roman statesmen, felt that the war against the Dacians, which Caesar himself had contemplated, must be undertaken without delay; it was a necessity for Roman policy, just as the destruction of Carthage had been at an earlier date.

Without dwelling further on these geographical, ethnographical, military and political considerations, we may add a further fact which played a large part in Trajan's decision to undertake the conquest and colonisation of Dacia: this was the economic situation of the Empire, which, under a series of incapable emperors, had become extremely bad. The treasury, in particular, was completely empty, so that the first care of Trajan was to appoint a commission to straighten out the budget. But at this moment of great financial straits, everyone was aware that, within easy reach, lay a country richer in gold than any in the Ancient World. The conquest of the Carpathians and the working of the mines which they contained meant, among other things, salvation for the finances of the Empire, and renewed prosperity for the Empire itself ¹⁾. This is the explanation of the fact that, immediately after the conquest of Dacia, there began a colonisation movement on an extraordinary scale. There was an influx of immigrants, colonists and business men, like the movements which took place in modern times, after the discovery of gold in Cali-

¹⁾ This is what actually happened. The war tribute was so large that Trajan was able to suspend the collection of taxes throughout the Empire! J. Carcopino, *Les richesses des Daces et le redressement de l'Empire romain sous Trajan*, Dacia, I, p. 28f.

fornia or in the Transvaal. The newcomers rushed in especially from the adjoining regions, from Dalmatia, Moesia, Thrace and Asia Minor. But a goodly number must have come also from Italy itself, for the system of the *latifundia* and the cultivation of the land by slaves had at this time reduced the Italian farmers to a state of poverty which compelled them to emigrate. Thus was formed in the Carpathians a new people. The Latin language, commonly spoken since the time of Tiberius in the whole of Pannonia ("*in omnibus Pannoniis*"), penetrated to the very heart of the Carpathians, and this language became the chief factor in the Romanisation of the Dacians and, consequently, in the creation of a new race.

4. *Persistence of the Dacian element.* It would be a great mistake to suppose that the submission of Decebalus meant the disappearance of the Dacian people. After the conquest of the country, it is true, the people were divided into two groups, differing in their way of living and in their destiny.

a) *The Dacians who submitted* were gradually Romanised. Trajan's Column, indeed, in the reliefs representing the end of the war, depicts scenes of emigration. It shows also that some of the nobles killed themselves by taking poison; others withdrew to the regions of the north and east, not yet occupied by the Romans. But, after the second war, the submissions were far more numerous¹⁾. Those who had taken the oath before the death of Decebalus were doubtless no longer tempted to emigrate after the death of that king, who represented the ultimate resistance.

Moreover, a people which has been civilised for a thousand years, which possesses cultivated fields²⁾ and extensive vineyards — forms of agriculture presupposing a close union between man and the soil — and which works rich salt mines and gold mines, can never be uprooted. Indeed, the inscriptions clearly show that the Dacians, remaining where they were, accepted Roman rule, adopted Roman names,

¹⁾ Dion Cassius, LXVIII, 11.

²⁾ Trajan's Column shows us the legionaries on the march stopping to harvest the fields which they encounter.

took public office, and ended by becoming Romanised, both themselves and their children. This fusion of the races took place not only in the country, among peasants, but also, and still more easily, in the cities, among the Dacians of the upper classes. It is a well known fact that the Romans treated their vanquished enemies with much consideration. They carried their consideration for the Dacians so far as to leave them, in certain regions, a sort of autonomy. The inscriptions even tell us of a Dacian queen buried in the territory occupied by the Romans ¹⁾; and later on, a certain number of Dacians even reached the imperial throne (Regalianus, elected emperor in 263 A.D., was a descendant of Decebalus ²⁾).

Thus was formed a new Daco-Roman people, at the end of a process of economic, racial, military and political penetration which went on for several centuries ³⁾.

It is unquestionable that the conquest of Dacia was a crowning achievement in the development of the Empire. For it was only after the submission of Dacia that the Latin language and civilisation spread more widely on the right bank of the Danube, in Moesia and in all the rest of the Balkan peninsula. We note the foundation at this period, in the interior of these countries, of "Roman cities" so called in contrast with the "Greek cities" situated on the coast. One after the other were created Traianopolis, Marcianopolis (to the west of Varna), Nicopolis (on the slopes of the Balkans), Adrianopolis, Ulpia Serdica, and others.

The birth of a new people, by the grafting of the Roman element on the Dacian stock, led to a sort of regeneration of the Empire in all the lands between the Adriatic and the

¹⁾ V. Pârvan, *Contribuții epigrafice la istoria creștinismului daco-român*, 1911, p. 25.

²⁾ Trebellius Pollio, *Triginta Tyranni* IX (apud Xenopol, p. 146).

³⁾ Strabo tells us that the Iberians, isolated as their peninsula was from Italy, from which Gaul separated them, had at the end of 200 years already forgotten the language of their fathers and adopted that of the conqueror. This rapid change was caused primarily by the working of the silver mines, which constantly attracted new immigrants from Italy (Mommsen). If that was possible in Spain, it was much easier in Dacia, where the mineral wealth was greater (gold and salt), and where the neighbourhood of Dalmatia, Illyria and Pannonia naturally facilitated the spread of the Latin language.

Black Sea. It has rightly been said that, in the second century A.D., the Danubian provinces formed a group of countries which set the peace for the whole Empire ¹⁾. Now it is evident that, in this work of racial fusion, the energy of the Dacians must be allowed to have had a large part; for, while they adopted the Latin tongue, they kept their specific characteristics and were able to preserve the peculiarities of their race and even some of their own institutions. We know that, after the conquest by Caesar, Gaul was at first a part of the Roman Empire only in name, since the Celto-Gallic culture survived for more than a century ²⁾. In the Carpathians, the situation must have been similar especially in view of the fact that, beyond the frontier occupied by the legions, there remained a large territory peopled by independent Dacians.

b) *The free Dacians* occupied the upper basin of the Tisza, a great part of the eastern Carpathians, and the regions composed of the spurs and slopes of these mountains as far as the valley of the Dniester. Ptolemy, in the middle of the second century of the Christian era, enumerates no less than 15 Dacian tribes, among them the *Carpi*, from whose name the word Carpathian is derived. Their settlements (*dave*) occupied the regions which stretch to the basin of the Dniester, the course of which is traced with considerable accuracy on the map of the great geographer, proving that he knew it well.

At least a third of the old Dacian state had remained in the hands of its former masters; and they did not forget their legacy from Decebalus: a fight to the death against the Romans. Indeed, they lost no opportunity to combat the invaders of their country. In 162 A.D., the Dacians went so far as to take the offensive and entered Macedonia and Achaia, thus reviving the old days when their fathers and grandfathers had decimated the Roman legions and forced Domitian to pay tribute. Twenty years

¹⁾ Speck, *ibid.*, p. 805.

²⁾ Forrer, *Zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte Elsass-Lothringens*, 1901, p. 35.

later, in 180, another campaign was fought against the Romans; and, in the following century, the struggle continued with an exasperation no less stubborn. In 236 A.D., the Dacians joined with the Iazyges in an attack on the frontiers of the Empire. In 238, the Carpi passed the Danube, where the Emperor Philip and his son of the same name fought fierce campaigns against them. Finally, in spite of the titles of *Dacicus* and *Carpicus* proudly assumed by several emperors, Aurelian came to the conclusion that Dacia could no longer be defended. Thus, after an occupation which had lasted a century and a half, the emperor withdrew his legions from the occupied territory. He himself died at the hand of a Dacian. His successor Probus was able only with difficulty to calm the frenzy of the Dacians and to make them allies of the Empire — *et omnes geticos populos in amicitiam recepit*.

Thus ended the official intervention of Rome in the Carpathian provinces. But, curiously enough, this did not diminish Roman influence; on the contrary, it now developed to an unexpected extent. After the withdrawal of the legions, when the barbarian masses had encircled the Carpathian citadel, the Daco-Romans and the Dacians who were not yet Romanised became conscious of their racial unity, especially when they saw the contrast between their way of living and the far inferior ways of the barbarians. This explains the fact that the adjective "romanus" came to imply superiority and finally became the name of the people of the Carpathians. No doubt this name was not at first applied to all the free Dacians. Some decades after the departure of the legions, in the reign of Galerian (who was of Dacian origin), we still find "Dacian" troops enlisted for the conquest of the mountain country of Armenia (297 A.D.), during a campaign in which the emperor had lost the opening battles. But, with time, the name, the language and the Christian faith which they had in common cemented the unity of all the populations connected with the Carpathian citadel, which was assailed without cease by new floods of barbarians.

Thus, for the ethnography of the Carpathians, the most important event in antiquity was the Roman infiltration; but the Romanisation of the lower Danube *"which had begun long before Trajan, likewise continued long after him, and even after the Romans abandoned Dacia"* The result, both racially and politically, was of great importance:

By the Romanisation of Dacia, Rome extended her influence to the eastern confines of Europe proper, and established in the Carpathians a "border" people, a watchful sentinel placed at the edge of the steppe in which wandered hordes of Asiatic nomads.

5. *Mediaeval influences and new racial elements.* The withdrawal of the legions from Dacia was due not only to the continual struggles against the free Dacians and their allies (the Iazyges, the Goths, and others), but also to more general causes which have led certain historians to adopt two great fallacies: the first is the belief that the whole population of Dacia evacuated the province on the departure of the legions; the second, that this moment marked the beginning of a cataclysm and the commencement of a new period of history, called "the period of the barbarian invasions".

These two hypotheses have not the slightest foundation, for they are in contradiction with the facts of ethnography and of history. There is no such thing as a period of invasions in history, just as there is no such thing as a period of tempests in physical geography. There have been certain times in the evolution of mankind when invasions were a normal phenomenon over the whole surface of the globe. Here, in southeastern Europe, these movements appear from the dawn of history, notably in the basin of the Aegean Sea and in the Danube Valley, where we meet the Celts coming from the west some centuries before the Christian era, and a little later (180 A.D.) the Bastarni migrating from the Baltic to the country south of the Danube, not to mention the continual ebb and flow of the nomads of the Pontic steppe.

It is, therefore, an entirely unjustified exaggeration of the significance of these events to begin a new era with the invasion of the Goths and the abandonment of Dacia by the Romans. Not even the coming of the Huns, a people of an entirely different race, foreign to the European races, justifies a break of this sort in the history of the continent, if the facts are carefully examined. The traditional portrait of Attila, called the Scourge of God, is chiefly the work of Ammianus Marcellinus, who wrote his history — a veritable rhetorical exercise — to be read in the forum and to create a sensation; the author therefore declaims like an actor, in order to secure a greater effect. If, on the contrary, we listen to Priscus, the ambassador who sat at the table of the King of the Huns, the portrait will be quite different; we shall learn to recognise in Attila a man endowed with superior qualities and even with a subtle intelligence. This Asiatic conqueror, in fact, had no less an ambition than to found on the Danube a great Empire, capable of opposing the Romans; and he took an interest in the commercial relations between the peoples dwelling on either bank of the river.

There is, then, no trace of a cataclysm. The barbarians, that is, those who were so called by the Greeks and Romans, did not act like a stream of lava which consumes whatever it happens to find in its path; they were too shrewd for that. After the inevitable pillage of the first moment — such as modern wars too have witnessed — the invaders sought to defend the occupied territory in order to draw profit from the soil and from the labour of its inhabitants, especially in the regions where the winters were severe, as was the case in the basin of the lower Danube. The natives constituted for them the most valuable wealth of the territory, and they protected them, as is shown by the measures taken by Attila to maintain exchanges of goods on the Danube frontier.

The Germanic peoples from the north, like the nomads from the steppe, had the same interest. Tacitus tells us that the Germans were little inclined to agriculture. When they

were not making war, the men passed their time hunting; and the labours of the fields were left to the women and the serfs. The latter were obliged to supply their masters with cereals, cattle, clothing, etc. These serfs were so necessary to the Germans that, in the time of Marcus Aurelius, the Marcomanni undertook expeditions into the Roman Empire, where agriculture was more highly developed, for the sole purpose of carrying off peasants to serve them as agricultural labourers.

All these facts make it clear that the people of Dacia (except the government officials) had no motive to abandon a territory of 115,000 square miles in order to crowd into the narrow valley of the Timoc, where Aurelian had created a small province under the name of New Dacia, known also as Aurelian Dacia. Dacia, then, was not abandoned for fear of the Goths, but for other reasons. It was not the barbarians who caused the weakening and then the fall of the Roman Empire, as is habitually claimed; on the contrary, the internal weakening of the Empire brought about the contraction of the frontiers, which was followed by the advance of the barbarians beyond the limits of the Danube and the Rhine.

It should not be forgotten either that Aurelian, a great general and a statesman of genius, was already concerned at this time about the fate which threatened his capital. He built a wall around Rome, so strongly did he feel that the Empire was sick to the very heart.

This fatal sickness was partly due to a constitutional defect: the absence of a normal method of providing for the succession to the imperial throne. From the first Flavians to Marcus Aurelius, this defect had been remedied by recourse to adoption. Marcus Aurelius, unfortunately, instead of following this practice and of leaving the election to the Senate, imposed as sovereign his own son Commodus — a monster. After the assassination of the latter, competitions for the throne and foreign wars became chronic. The Senate opposed Septimius Severus, and the latter took his revenge by depriving that assembly of its

rôle as regulator of the succession. From this time on, the legions remained sole masters and they placed on the throne whomever they pleased ¹⁾. Thus, beginning with the third century, the Empire was on its death bed. Struggles between the generals brought about its total ruin: destruction of men and of wealth, monetary inflation, paralysis of commerce, decay of cities, and all the consequences of these phenomena. As a final misfortune, it became difficult to recruit soldiers, for Christians consider military service as a sin.

What defenders were left to the Empire? The barbarians alone, either as mercenaries or as allies (*foederati*). In this connection, the following fact is characteristic: when the legions had withdrawn from Dacia, leaving it to the Goths, the garrison, even on the right bank of the Danube, was still made up of Gothic troops. We know the names of their chiefs, enrolled under the Roman standards (*Hartomundus*, *Haldegastes*, *Hildemundus*, *Carioviscus*, etc.). The arrival of the Goths in the Dacia of Trajan resembles less a conquest than a change of garrison within the same army. The barbarians who furnished auxiliary troops were used to fighting not only against the Empire, but also for it. As to the cataclysm invented by certain theorists of history, it goes without saying that it never happened. The Goths in particular had already partly been converted to Christianity, and were consequently already accustomed to a more civilised life than that which they had led in the forests and marches of northern Europe.

It was natural, under these conditions, that the Daco-Roman population should not follow the legions in their withdrawal. The Romanised Dacians and still more the free Dacians knew how easily they had penetrated to the very centre of the Empire, alone or in company with the Goths and the Iazyges. In 238, the Carpi had passed the Danube with the Goths. In 261, the Alemanni got as far as Milan. In 287, the Heruli set up their camps near Athens

¹⁾ G. Ferrero, *La ruine de la civilisation antique*, Paris, pp. 59, 99.

and Sparta. In 268, the Goths, by land and by sea, made the circuit of the Empire, going as far as Rhodes and Cyprus.

What advantages and what security could the peasants of Dacia have obtained by abandoning their fruitful lands to follow the legions, when the weakness of the Empire was so manifest? Just as, at an earlier date, after the fall of Decebalus, large numbers of the Dacians had been unable to leave their extensive country — so the Romanised Dacians as well as the free Dacians — friends and allies of the Goths — could not now abandon their native land.

They were the less tempted to do so because the demands of the Roman treasury had increased in recent years to an exorbitant extent; for, in consequence of the inflation caused by the debased currency, a new measure had been promulgated requiring the payment of taxes, not in depreciated coin, but exclusively in gold and silver. In these circumstances, the inhabitants of the right bank of the Danube sought to flee to the left bank, where neither the cadastral survey nor this method of taxation had been introduced. Salvianus says explicitly on this subject: "The peasants with one accord ask to be allowed to live with the barbarians . . .".

To cap the anticlimax, the barbarians came to be considered at certain moments as the real bulwarks of the Empire, not only because they furnished troops, filling the vacancies left by the Christians, but also because they provided labourers for agriculture. Probus, the successor of Aurelian, and, like the latter, an outstanding man of war and statesman, describes the relations with the barbarians as follows, in a letter to the Senate: "The oxen of the barbarians plough for the Romans . . . their herds of cattle graze to feed the Romans; their studs furnish horses to the Roman army; the Roman granaries are filled with grain harvested by the barbarians . . . We have left them only the soil, and we are masters of all" ¹).

¹) Probus, *Historiae augustae scriptores*, 15.

It is as erroneous, then, to speak of an evacuation of Dacia by its inhabitants as of a cataclysm caused by the barbarians. The truth is that, after the departure of the legions, the sojourn of the Goths, which lasted only a century in the region of the lower Danube, failed to produce any very appreciable modification in the Daco-Roman population.

The Goths in their turn, after having been neighbours of the Daco-Romans for a century, abandoned the lower Danube under the pressure of the Huns, to fulfil their destiny in other parts of Europe; while the Carpatho-Danubian population was obliged, for another century, to suffer the neighbourhood of the Huns in the western part of Dacia, in the plain of the Tisza. But, as we have said, the Huns did not cause any historic catastrophe either. As the centre from which their expeditions set forth was near to Dacia, that country, far from being devastated, had to be protected by them so that they might use it as winter quarters.

After the disappearance of the Huns, who left no trace, there appeared successively other invaders, always on the western frontiers of Dacia. First came the Gepids, who remained there for a century (until 567). But these newcomers, whose manners were more gentle, were already forerunners of better times. They practised agriculture, and were therefore more sedentary. Some historians even believe that the Gepids must have played a part in the formation of the Rumanian people at least equal to that taken by the Franks and the Lombards in the formation of the French and the Italian peoples ¹⁾.

Whatever may be the worth of this hypothesis, one thing is certain — that the Gepids, like their predecessors, did not annihilate the native population. The Goths had been few in number in proportion to the extent of their expeditions by land and sea, so that they were unable to make any impression on the solid mass of the Romanised population of the Carpathians; the Huns still less, coming

¹⁾ C. Diclescu, *Die Gepiden*, Leipzig, 1922, I, p. vii.

as they did from the steppe and belonging to another race; as to the Gepids, even if they did mix to some extent with the native element, it remains to be discovered in what proportion. One fact is sure: the traces of the Gepid language in the Rumanian language are so insignificant that they rather provide a strong proof of the continuity of the original race of the Carpathians. Three hundred years, then, had rolled by since the withdrawal of the legions, and the population of the Carpathians had steadfastly maintained itself on the same soil, though without succeeding in forming a State in the proper sense of the term.

We should not forget either that, from the time of the Roman occupation, as we shall see below, Christianity had penetrated to the very centre of Dacia. But the real Christian must neither bear arms nor take part in war . . . St. Augustine himself was to teach later on that it is a matter of indifference for a good Christian whether he is a subject of the Roman Empire or a subject of the barbarians, provided only that the laws of the State do not constrain him to acts of impiety.

These facts enable us to understand how the population of the Carpathians could view with relative calm the invasion of the Avars (567), when that alien race settled in the Pannonian steppe. Interfering with the people of the Carpathians no more than the Huns had formerly done, they had no disastrous effect on its existence, especially in view of the fact that the Carpathian people had long since become habituated to barbarian invasions.

Nevertheless, this period of the invasions, which lasted about 500 years, had an indirect influence on the Daco-Roman people: the Germanic invaders, as well as the Asiatic invaders, the Huns and Avars, who lived around Dacia, had brought Slav elements with them in their migrations. In their native country — the upper basin of the Dnieper — the Slavs formed a defenceless mass. Though more inclined to agriculture than the Germans, they nevertheless lived a wandering life. Devoid of the warlike spirit, and very poorly armed (it was rare that there was any iron in

their weapons), they seemed predestined to supply the slave markets. Thus Slav and slave had come to be synonymous terms.

Many of these Slavs were brought into Dacia by the invaders as a sort of portable property. The Avars in particular used the Slavs for all sorts of tasks, whence the significant proverb: "The Slav is the Avar's dog". Thus is explained the slow infiltration of Slavs into the Rumanian lands. Place-names in the Carpathians and the surrounding country furnish sufficient proof of this. For example, the great rivers have Rumanian names, which signifies that their valleys always remained centres of Rumanian life; whereas many small tributaries bear Slav names, which proves that, if the Huns and Avars remained in the Pannonian plain, similar to the plains of Asia, the Slavs, on the contrary, were relegated to the mountains. In any case, whoever brought them, and however they may have reached this country, the part which they played must have been that of simple unskilled labourers. In the Rumanian language, the words *munca* (work) and *robota* (drudgery) are Slav words which are still used to-day for manual activity; whereas the Latin language furnished the Rumanians with the verb *a lucra, lucrare*, from *lucrum*, to designate a higher activity, productive of gain, so that the term keeps its most general meaning. In any case, one fact is proved: that the racial elements resulting from the Slav infiltration have completely blended with the mass of the Rumanians. *Nowhere in Rumania has the smallest isolated group of Slavs survived*, like that of Lausitz in Germany. As to the question whether the Rumanian people may not have received some Slavic tinge, it cannot be reasonably discussed, any more than it can be affirmed that the Germans are the product of a mixture with the Slavs because Slav place-names are found as far west and south as the neighbourhood of the Rhine and the Alps.

Thus, from the racial standpoint the Slav element might have been practically without importance in the deve-

lopment of the Rumanian people if it had not been for a decisive event which occurred in the seventh century to the south of the Danube: at that moment the Slavs, after having lived for a long time as dependents of warlike races, notably under the rule of the Avars, began to shake off their former passivity and to organise themselves on a military basis. They had profited by the lessons of the Avars, a people of horsemen, who used them as infantry, and, in the 7th century, becoming enterprising in their turn, they invaded the Balkan peninsula, separating the Rumanians of the Carpathians from their brothers of the Balkans, and also from the western Roman world. *This fact is the most important event in the development of the Latin east.* Thrust like a wedge into the mass of the Romanised population, the Slavs settled on the right bank of the Danube, occupying the lower and middle basin of the river ¹⁾. Thus the Rumanian elements south of the river were to be exposed henceforth to age-long assaults, by the Slavs and Greeks on the one hand, and by the Turks on the other. This was to result for them in a long national death-struggle, issuing in the loss of their own racial individuality. They survived, however, for some of them were shepherds, migrating with the seasons between the Adriatic and the Aegean Sea; others had taken up a commercial life and transported by caravan into the interior of the peninsula the merchandise of the nearby seas; finally, some of them engaged in industry and worked in metals. Thus the Rumanians south of the Danube, formed by commerce and industry, inevitably polyglot, became a useful ferment in the life of the Balkan peoples. In the Middle Ages, under the Rumanian dynasty of the Assanids, they founded there for a time a State, in order to resist the Byzantines. Not only the dynasty, but the very title of the Emperor attests the preponderance of the Rumanians (*"dominus Blacorum et Bulgarorum"*). Later on, they fought for Greek independence,

¹⁾ "The Slavs — the Yugoslavs of today — spread through the peninsula by quiet infiltration or by invasion". I. Cvijič, *La Péninsule Balcanique* 1918, p. 90.

helped in the revival of Bulgaria, and provided 19th century Serbia with political leaders ¹⁾.

But the fate of leaven is to spread through the fermenting mass. That is what happened to the Rumanian element, which spread throughout the whole Balkan peninsula. To-day there are still Rumanians in Greece, around Olympus; others in Albania, still others in the rest of Greece and in Bulgaria; but, in many regions, they have completely disappeared. In the centre of Montenegro, however, the names of the peaks *Durmitor* and *Visitor* bear witness that the Alpine slopes along the Adriatic once served as pastures for Rumanian shepherds.

Thus, of all the influences which were brought to bear during the Middle Ages on the Rumanian people, the most important, though a negative one, was that of the Slavs. Their migration into the Balkan peninsula ends the chief period of the formation of the Rumanian people. The barbarians who came later, down to the great invasion of the Tatars, were all of Asiatic origin and disappeared without leaving the slightest trace, like the Huns and the Avars before them.

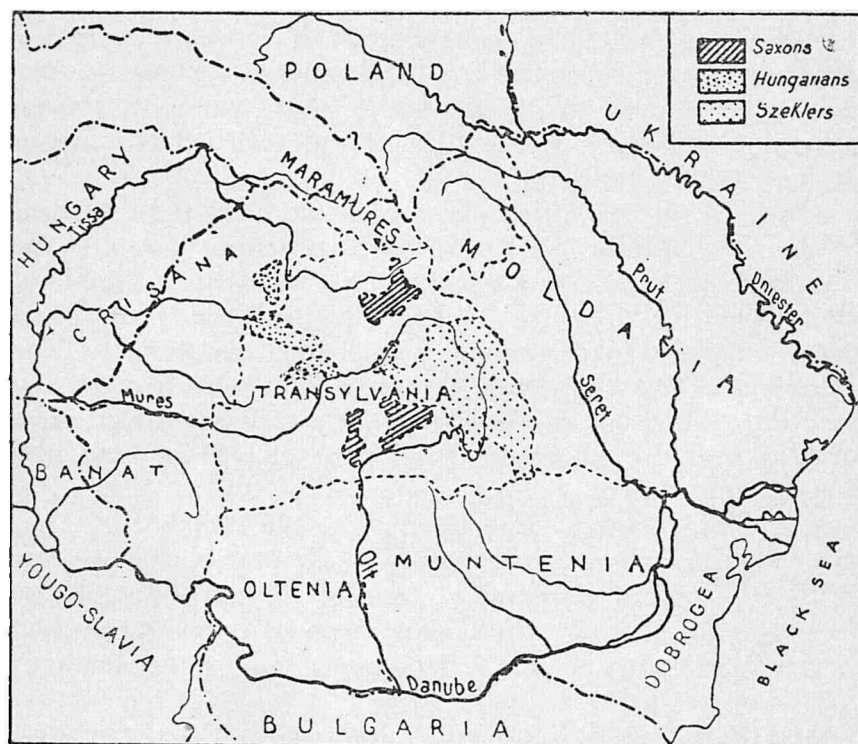
6. *Racial enclaves*. The border people which for more than a thousand years were exposed to the barbarian invasions could not remain completely free of all deposits left by these tides of race. It would have been a miracle if they had sustained so many assaults without having some scars to show for it.

And the inevitable happened. One of these Asiatic hordes, the Hungarians, settled in the Pannonian steppe, where the Huns and the Avars had already camped, and remained there. They had reached that region by crossing the Forest

¹⁾ At the beginning of the 19th century, the "Arománi" and the Greeks played the leading rôle, even at Belgrade. When the Serbians had escaped from the Turkish yoke, the Rumanians, who formed one of the wealthiest classes in the country, realised the needs of the future. They sent their children to school much more frequently than the Serbs did. For this reason, a large part of the Balkan intellectuals were of "Aromatic" or mixed origin (Serbo-Rumanian in Serbia, Bulgaro-Rumanian in Bulgaria). In addition, the Rumanians have provided Serbia with ministers and even with prime ministers. (I. Cvijić, *ibid.*, pp. 400, 401).

Carpathians (*Waldkarpathen*), and had at first settled in the plain of the Tisza.

Thence they gradually pushed forward toward the bastion of the Carpathians, which, covered as they were with forests, impressed these children of the steppe as being an immense *sylva*. In consequence, the region lying



Racial enclaves: Saxons, Hungarians and Szeklers (Săcui)

beyond these forests was given the characteristic name of *Transylvania*. This name, which dates from the Hungarian invasion, has remained in use down to our own day to designate the plateau surrounded by the Rumanian Carpathians. But the movement of penetration into the autochthonous mass of the Carpathian people took place very slowly. The Hungarians arrived in 896 in the Pannonian plain; but it was not until 1210, or three hundred years

later, that they reached the territory of the *Bârsa*, at the southeastern extremity of Transylvania.

The Hungarians, like their elder brothers the Huns and the Avars, would probably have disappeared without leaving a trace if they had kept their Asiatic characteristics. Their contemporaries at first regarded them as real monsters ¹⁾. But they gradually settled in the Pannonian plain, from whence they made continual raids into the countries round about, coming back with booty and with women taken from their neighbours. This led to a growing transformation. The invaders gradually lost the traits of their Mongol origin and adapted themselves to the European way of life. They ended by adopting Christianity and by settling down permanently. Then, with the Pannonian steppe as their base, they sought to occupy the whole circle of surrounding mountains. In so doing, they came into conflict with the first political organization formed by the Rumanians, who were beginning at this period to establish embryonic States. In the course of three centuries, the Hungarians gradually invaded the whole Transylvanian plateau, as far as the chain of the Carpathians.

Isolated groups of Magyars have survived to the present day in the upper basin of the Olt and in that of the Mureş, on the eastern margin of Transylvania. These groups constitute a first alien element among the natives of the Carpathians.

This enclave of people of foreign origin was due, among other causes, to the need felt by the Hungarians to defend themselves against the Asiatic incursions of the Petchenegs, Cumans, and Tatars, who had driven them from the Ural region and continued to harass them. In addition to the

¹⁾ The Abbot Regino (10th century) says of them: "The Hungarians live much like wild beasts, on raw meat and blood. They cut in pieces the hearts of their dead enemies and swallow them as medicine". Ricardo records similar facts in his Chronicle: "The Hungarians live like wild beasts, without cultivating the soil; eating the flesh of the horse, the wolf, and other animals, drinking horses' milk and blood". The Bishop of Freysing, finally, describes them as follows: "The Hungarians are frightful men, with deepest eyes, short of stature, barbarous and savage in their manners and their language — a sort of human monsters". (See Xenopol, II, p. 145, and Bunea, *Address delivered to the Rumanian Academy*, p. 4).

favourable situation of the place, this was one of the reasons for the settlement and for the continuance of the Săcui in the inter-Carpathian depression, their rôle being to defend the mountain citadel against assaults from the East.

The second enclave is also the work of the Hungarians. Their kings, for the defence of the passages and the working of the mines, saw fit to bring in colonists from Germany, known today as *Sași* (Saxons). Thanks to them, urban life, which had suffered so severely during the period of the invasions, was effectively revived; but Transylvania sustained by this fact a further racial intrusion in the valleys of the Great and of the Little Târnava.

It is to be observed that the foreign enclaves shown on the ethnographical map to the east of the Transylvanian plateau do not represent the old settlements from the period of the infiltrations of the Saxons and Hungarians. The Saxons are decreasing in numbers. The latest map ¹⁾, prepared by a German scholar, shows as submerged islands a few German settlements which have disappeared in the surrounding mass of the Rumanian element.

On the other hand, the mediaeval Hungarian enclave has been enlarged by recent colonisation and by other measures intended to dislocate the autochthonous population. Thus the *Săcui* ("die Szekler") are in large part only Rumanians who have adopted the Magyar tongue, though they have kept the Orthodox form of religion in some places down to the present. There are localities where it is still possible to follow clearly the vicissitudes of the struggles between the native element and the newcomers. The town of Satu-Mare is, as its name indicates, a Rumanian foundation (*sat* from the Latin *fossatum*) as are, indeed, all the surrounding villages. At a later date it received German colonists, brought in by the kings of Hungary, and took the hybrid name of "German Satu Mare" (*nemțesc* = "Nemzeti Satmar"). Finally, under the influence of the Hungarian administration and as a result of certain

¹⁾ Langhans, *Pet. Mitt.*, 1915.

special circumstances, it became in the course of time a Magyar city. Today the contrary tendency is uppermost and will restore the city to the Rumanian civilisation which once gave birth to it.

What will ultimately be the fate of these racial enclaves? That is a question which time will answer.

If we now survey rapidly all the influences of the Middle Ages, in the midst of which the Rumanian people, like other European peoples, had to shape its individuality, we come to the following conclusions:

1. *The old Daco-Rumanian substratum still occupies to-day, as the ethnographic map indicates, nearly the whole territory of ancient Dacia, as it was in the time of Burebista, of Decebalus and of Trajan.* The small contributions of the mediaeval period made no appreciable addition to the Rumanian mass north of the Danube; and the three central enclaves do not alter the fact that the people occupying the region of the Carpathians is homogeneous.

In the eyes of some historians, the long preponderance of the Rumanian element in so exposed a geographical situation seems almost miraculous.

For the ethnographer, this phenomenon is not at all surprising. We have pointed out that the economic life of the barbarians was purely parasitic. These nomadic peoples, who lived by hunting and the spoils of war, were forced by circumstances to resort to the labour of the Rumanian farmers and of the serfs whom they brought with them as a sort of portable wealth. That is why these political and racial waves passed, while the Rumanian land, with its people and its traditions, maintained itself, at the cost of enduring the power of the new barbarian who drove out and scattered the old.

Nor should we forget that these barbarians were few in number. We know that there were certain tribes — such as the Bulgars — who could all find room in a camp three miles square. It is not surprising that they were so rapidly Slavised, preserving no other trace of their origin than their name. The Avars themselves, for all their high renown

and for all their two and a half centuries of domination, numbered no more than 200,000 men. The power of the barbarians was in the main military and political, not economic and demographic.

In addition, we must give due weight to the superiority of the Christians and civilised Rumanians, whose life contrasted with the quite primitive ways of the barbarians. The terms *carte* (book) and *scriere* (writing) prove that, even at the time of the invasions, the peasants of the Carpathians and of the surrounding districts possessed a culture superior to that of the invaders. Their civilisation placed them on a higher level than their neighbours, even from the purely material standpoint. Thus the word *turma* (flock) has passed from the Rumanian language to all the Slavs of the region — Ruthenians, Poles, Czechoslovaks and Serbs. The concept expressed by *turma* implies a pastoral life exercised over very extended areas, permitting seasonal migration from summer to winter pastures, and, consequently, some degree of regularity in the changes from one sheepfold to another and a sufficient security for the flocks. The word *chiag* (rennet), from the Latin *coagulum*, also entered the Slav languages at a very early date.

Another very characteristic fact is that all the terms relative to *viticulture* are Latin, which proves that the invaders and their serfs had no part in the development of this special cultivation which demands of those who practise it stability and constant care. Finally, all the vocabulary of agriculture is of Latin origin: *a ara* (arare) to plough, *a semăna* (seminare) to sow, *grău* (granum) grain, wheat, *meiu* (miliu) millet, *secara* (secale) rye, *orz* (hordeum) barley, *jug* (jugum) yoke, *vaca* (vaca) cow, *taur* (taurus) bull, *capra* (capra) goat, and a host of other words prove beyond a doubt how absurd is the opinion of those people who claim that the Rumanians were forced to confine themselves to the mountains to escape the barbarians and that they therefore completely changed their way of life.

On the contrary, as we have said, the peasants of the Carpathians and of the surrounding regions, for the very

reason that they were shepherds and farmers, were indispensable to the invaders, who were inferior to them in civilisation. For the ethnographer, the real miracle would have been something quite different — that the Rumanians should have abandoned their agricultural land ; that, a thousand years later, they should have become once more farmers and vine-growers ; and that they should then have remembered, after so many centuries, the long-forgotten Latin vocabulary.

2. The second important consideration is that *the invaders disappeared leaving no trace*. The Celtic, Germanic, and Slav elements were completely assimilated ; while the peoples of markedly different race (the Asiatics) perished so completely that no vestige of them remains.

The ethnographer, then, agrees with the geographer and the historian that the "border" people occupying the Carpathian citadel has for more than two thousand years fulfilled its rôle as the vanguard of Europe in the face of the half-Asiatic world of the Ponto-Caspian steppes.

CONCLUSION

To complete this summary statement of the genesis of the Rumanian people, there is still one question to be answered. To what degree can the Rumanians be regarded as a homogeneous people ?

A term of comparison will facilitate our answer. We take it from one of the keenest minds of our time — one of the makers of political geography — the Swedish scientist R. Kyellen. Speaking of the people of his own country, he tells us that it has been formed upon a foreign substratum (of Arctic, Finnish or Lapp races). He mentions in proof of this, among other things, the fact that in the age of the Vikings "the slave element represented at least the half of the total population" ¹⁾. He next enumerates as constituent elements in the Swedish race the *Heruli*, from the south ; the *Germans*, the *Danes* (the latter in considerable numbers), the *Walloons* (of "Roman" race), and the *Dutch*,

¹⁾ R. Kyellen, *Schweden* 1917, p. 66.

in addition to the *Finns*, mentioned above. And, in spite of these intrusions, he is able to conclude as follows: "The Swedish people are anything but a mixed people (*Mischvolk*). They are, on the contrary, the people which have the purest and the oldest Aryan blood, and they may be considered, with the Norwegians, as the purest of racial phenomena".

The German people are likewise regarded as one of the most homogeneous peoples. The considerable number of Slav names among German place names has not suggested to any one the idea of regarding them as a people made up of unassimilated elements. This viewpoint, then, can be applied to other analogous cases. We may apply it, for example, to the case of the Getae and the Dacians, who constitute the substratum of the people of the Carpathians, and who were more nearly related to one another than were the Svears and the Goths, the two ancestral sources of the Swedish people; for, in the last analysis, Getae and Dacians are merely two different names given to one and the same people by the Greeks and the Romans respectively. Add to this that the Roman colonisation under Trajan did not constitute an addition of elements of a foreign race, since these colonists were Illyrians and Thracians, and thus belonged to nearly related peoples. The colonists from Asia Minor were not of widely different origin either, since a large part of that peninsula had been occupied ¹⁾ by Thracian tribes.

As to the Celtic, Germanic and Slav elements which may have amalgamated with the people of the Carpathians, they were in any case more nearly related to the Daco-Romans than the Finns are to the Swedes.

Thus the composition of the people of the Carpathians may be considered as sufficiently homogeneous, especially if the fact be considered that this people has lived, not in a peninsula sheltered from invasions, like the Scandinavians, but on the contrary at the crossroads of all the

¹⁾ Wachner, *op. cit.*, p. 424.

oriental invasions. A Saxon geographer who has had the best of opportunities for knowing the Rumanian people, since he lives in one of the Saxon enclaves in the very heart of Rumania, considers it as *one of the purest in all Europe* ¹⁾.

If this homogeneity, which makes it possible for the Rumanians from all corners of the country to live in harmony with one another, continues to increase with time, it is possible to regard the future with confidence, in view of these two facts:

In the thirty years immediately preceding the World War, the population of the old kingdom increased by 52%. If this increase continues at the same rate, Rumania will have within its present territory in 1950 nearly 35 million inhabitants. Such an increase in population would cause the disappearance of some of the "scars" or alien enclaves which the country has inherited from the past and which it has not yet assimilated because of its situation as a "border" people, placed, as an old chronicler has it, "in the road of all ills". The cities, especially, with their mixed population due to the former political régimes (Russians, Austrians, Hungarians) will become increasingly homogeneous.

Twenty years have passed since the Rumanian people, following upon the great war, succeeded in achieving political union and in escaping from the experiments in denationalisation to which its neighbours had been subjecting it.

The prospects which open before it are highly favourable. The people occupying the Carpathian mountain system is capable of a still higher integration than that which it has thus far attained ²⁾.

¹⁾ See the map on p. 12.

²⁾ This integration, it must be added, will not be achieved without some difficulties. In addition to certain foreign infiltrations which took place in the Rumanian provinces until recently dependent on Russia, Austria and Hungary, substantial invasions of Jews from the north and east driven out of Galicia, Russia, etc., came into Rumania in the 19th century. These Jews constitute a new problem for the Rumanian State.

II. FORMATION OF THE RUMANIAN STATE

1. *Territorial formation.* The modern scientists engaged in the study of human geography vary in their allegiance between two guiding principles: some of them attribute to the physical environment a preponderant influence on man; others, on the contrary, dwell particularly on the initiative of man and on his special rôle as the determinant factor of the geographical environment.

The truth must be sought, as a rule, between these two extremes. It is certain, for example, that possession of the marvellous straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, which link three seas, have not been able to transform the Turks into a seafaring nation; it is no less certain that the configuration of these straits, unique in the world, has produced its inevitable consequences (positive or negative) in all periods of the world's history, down to the latest drama of the world war. Consequently, in the formation of states and in the delimitation of their frontiers, the physical element is the first which commands our attention, as being the most durable; while the spontaneous energy of human masses constitutes at most a complementary factor.

From this standpoint, we see that *the bastion of the Carpathians has been, from antiquity to our day, the centre of attraction about which have tended to crystallise the frontiers of a State having a form adapted to this mountain system.*

We see, first of all, the Dacians (Burebista, Decebalus) create around the Carpathian mountain system a great continental State in opposition to the Roman Empire, sovereign master of the Mediterranean and of its shores. And when the antagonism between these two political structures was ended by the submission of the Carpathian kingdom to the Empire, it is significant that Dacia became "the farthest province", that is, the last piece of European territory to come within the Roman Empire. Like the Dacians before them, the Romans stopped at the line of the Dniester. Beyond, to the east, the region in which roamed

nomads and hunters, the men of the steppes and of the northern forests, was shrouded in the mists of the unknown.

If a geographer examines the map of the original Dacian State, and then that of Roman Dacia and of the frontier of the Roman Empire from the Rhine to the mouth of the Dniester — formed by rivers and by “*limites*” connecting those watercourses, *he cannot fail to note the connection between this line of frontier and the configuration and the position of the Carpathian mountain system and of the rivers which surround it.*

This statement is confirmed by an analysis of certain details. It is evident, for example, that the three defensive lines of entrenchments between Axiopolis (to the south of Cerna-Vodă) and Tomis (Constanța) were suggested by the course of the Danube — that they were indeed imposed by the easterly direction followed by the river from the Carpathians to the immediate vicinity of the sea. The narrowness of the Dobrogean peninsula in its central part, and the valley of the Carasu — a sort of trench defended by *bălți* and by marches — were physical elements of too great importance not to determine here a line of defence for the Roman Empire.

Similarly, after the establishment of Roman rule north of the Danube, the earthworks constructed from the banks of the Siret to those of the Dniester seem like a prolongation of the southern Carpathians. It may be said that these defensive works — still called today “Trajan’s rampart” — were suggested by the easterly direction of the chain of the southern Carpathians.

Two facts in particular attract attention:

Tyras is the most easterly Roman fortified place in Europe. In its ruins are found bricks bearing the insignia of almost all the Danube legions which successively guarded the Dniester, which represented the limit of the “Roman Far East”.

A second characteristic point is the fact that, even in the purely Dacic period, *the people of the Carpatians had*

sought an outlet to the sea. Long before the days of Burebista, the Geto-Dacians had extended their domination over the Greek cities on the shores of the Black Sea. The eastern frontier tended to reach not only the trench of the Dniester, but also the sea coast.

To sum up, the fact that Dacia is the last Roman conquest in the direction of the eastern steppe coincides with the physical fact that at the foot of the Carpathians ends the last orographic formation of a European character. Since antiquity, physical, ethnographical and historical elements have worked together to determine the political formation of this region.

After the withdrawal of the legions from Dacia, all regular political organisation disappears from this part of the world for many centuries. In the time of the invasions, there could be no question of political frontiers — at most, of virtual frontiers. The rule of the barbarians extended, in reality, only to the regions which they occupied on a military basis. Only there were the inhabitants considered as subjects, and only there did they pay tribute. Under Attila, for example, the seat of power was in the central camp, in Pannonia; as to the real frontier, it moved with the operations of the army. There could be no question, then, of a stable frontier in the region of the Carpathians; and this situation lasted throughout the period of the invasions.

It goes without saying that, during this phase of incessantly fluctuating barbarian political formations, the people of the Carpathians and of the neighbouring countries, disguised successively under the names of various short-lived States, such as Hunia, Gepidia, Avaria, Cumania, etc., constituted only an ethnic, not a political, reality. They were merely a mass of peasants; but they had, as common elements of cohesion, their *language* and their *name*. These two elements, indeed, counted for a great deal at the time; in contrast with the barbarians — constantly moving, and condemned to an inferior type of life — the *Carpathian population was conscious that it formed a unit apart*. Instinctively, it valued very highly the fact that it was “romana”;

and thus it came to pass that, of all the peoples which adopted the Latin language, the only one which bears a name derived from Rome is the one which is situated at the extreme east of Europe, where the Roman civilisation has continued to the present day to form a sort of distant island. Thus, during all this period, *the language and the name inherited from Rome were the factors determining what was Rumanian territory.*

The political organisation of the Rumanian people no longer deserved the name of a State; fallen to a lower level, it hardly went beyond the life of the *village* and the *district*. Each village = *sat* (from *fossatum*) — was a small defensive unit. The word *curte* (court), which designates the space surrounded by walls or palisades before the houses, is derived from *cohortem*. The chief or mayor of the village was called *jude* — the judge. He was the old *judex*, who had become in addition the administrative authority. When several villages formed an organic territorial unit (for example, those of a river basin, bound together by the needs of circulation along the valleys), authority over this group ¹⁾ was exercised by a higher judge, the *duke* or *voevod*, or even by a council of judges, for the more important lawsuits. The law applied by these judges could obviously not be any other than that which they had inherited from the Daco-Roman period. The Rumanians preserved their traditional law, to which they were particularly attached. They adapted it to circumstances; and it was presently distinguished from the laws of other peoples under the name of *jus valachicum* — Vlach law — and so known and recognised by neighbouring peoples.

Thus, in the Daco-Roman period, the Carpathian range and its rivers fixed the limits of the State; but after the break-up of the Roman Empire, the country village became the real political unit; and such boundaries as remained were property lines rather than political frontiers. More-

¹⁾ *Sedium valachalium congregatio.*

over, the political States set up by the barbarians after the withdrawal of the legions did not have definite boundaries either, in the real sense of the word. The cartographer who tries to mark those States on the map soon realises that he is losing his way in a labyrinth of hypotheses and illusions, since at certain moments of history their political boundaries were mere fictions.

The Rumanians might, indeed, have achieved a more definite organization of their territory by making use of the church organization, based on the division into episcopal dioceses. But this support also failed them. Christianity had made its way into Dacia gradually, by a sort of infiltration. When Christianity became the Roman State religion under Constantine, half a century had elapsed since the legions had departed from Dacia. The quarrels between bishops and the disputes between synods which immediately broke out in the Roman Empire remained absolutely foreign to the Christians of Dacia, who, living outside the boundaries of the Empire, took no part in the oecumenical councils. The church of the Carpathian people had almost no hierarchy. The basilica became the *biserica* (church), and side by side with the village "judges" appeared the village "pope" (replacing the old Roman priest who used to cut up the animals for the sacrifice). Furthermore, instead of having diocesan bishops as heads of administrative divisions, the Daco-Romans of the Carpathians were satisfied with village bishops (*chorepiscopi*), who formed a sort of rural clergy like that of the priests. And we must not be surprised that this rudimentary organization, both in civil and in ecclesiastical matters, sufficed for the peasants and country folk of Trajan's Dacia. Nor should we forget that the Dacians had regarded with great respect their religious leaders (*capnobati*) and that the Romans too were greatly attached to their cult. Rumanian Christianity, indifferent to dogmatic disputes, consisted mainly in ritual practices: the *rugăciune* (rogationem), prayer; the *ajun* (jejunium), fasting; the *carneleaga* (carnem ligare), Lent; *cașlegi* (caseum ligare), period of partial

fasting; *rusalie* (rosalia), Pentecost; *florilia* (florii), "Flowery Easter" or Palm Sunday; etc.

Where the adoption of Christianity was a political act commanded by the sovereign, the Church received its organization from the State. Among the Rumanians, on the contrary, the Church took the place of the State, and the Christian religion came in by imperceptible degrees.

It is true that Ulfilas preached Christianity in this country for seven years. Nichita, bishop of Remessiana, likewise came to spread the gospel among the peasants north of the Danube "wearing his hair long, clipped on the forehead", in the fashion of the ancient Dacians; but, from the administrative standpoint, this young church of Dacia, no longer part of the Empire since the retreat of the legions, organized itself outside of the official framework, and thus came to occupy, like the country itself, a border situation. It played a part, however, in consolidating the individuality of the Rumanian people, by adding religious unity to the unity of *language* and the unity of *name*. But that is all; for it was unable to provide the Rumanian people with an administrative framework capable of leading it to a more completely defined territorial organization.

Finally, however, political formations sprang up in Rumania — embryonic States, called forth by the needs of social life.

Contact with the barbarians implied a sort of community life, for the necessity of supplying them with the means of existence (tribute, winter quarters, etc.) inevitably presupposed local administrative agreements, during the occupation of the Huns — whose chief, Attila, was a man with broad political views — as well as during that of the Tatars. During the Tatar regime, we already find on Rumanian territory political groups sufficiently organised to have at their head voivodes, nobles and bishops ¹⁾.

¹⁾ The concordance between the accounts given by the Hungarian chronicles and that contained in a Persian chronicle based on Mongol documents contemporary with the Tatar invasion leaves no doubt as to the existence in the Carpathians, as early as the 13th century, of small but fairly well organized Rumanian States.

Even before the Tatar invasion, at the moment when the Hungarians, about the year one thousand, began to assail the Carpathians, the chronicle clearly shows us small duchies and their dukes (voivodes), who resist them and succumb in the struggle. It is natural to suppose that these political groups were not improvised then, but must have been of much older origin. We may infer, then, that, at various points of Rumanian territory, from the Danube to the upper basin of the Tisza, and from the plain of the Tisza — where the Hungarians on their arrival found the "*pastores Romanorum*" — to the east of the Dniester — where appeared the "Bolochoveni" (Bolochoy, "*villa Valachorum*") — relations with the invaders necessarily led to the formation of small political organisms.

Furthermore, we must not forget that, as the centuries passed, *the barbarians themselves became increasingly accessible to the idea of organization and of stabilisation*. Many of them had gone over to Christianity (a special episcopate had even been created for the Cumans); and even the Tatars, whose expeditions had at first seemed no thing less than a catastrophe, finally thought of settling, and sought to found in Transylvania a sort of local organization ¹⁾ (as they had done in Russia, where for centuries they remained the masters, and where they employed so advanced a device as the census).

It is not surprising, then, that the Rumanians, the real permanent masters of the soil, should have found it necessary — without regard to the temporary possessors, interested solely in collecting tribute — to create more and more definite territorial organizations. The very evolution of circumstances was impelling them toward a union of all the Rumanian elements into one State, bearing a growing resemblance to ancient Dacia.

¹⁾ A witness of the great invasion, the monk Rogerius, recounts facts which are quite characteristic: "*nec fruges nec stramina nec domos aliquas combusserunt*". On the other hand, "*constituerunt canestos (kinezi), id est balivos, qui justitiam facerent et equos, animalia, arma et vestimenta utilia procurarent . . . pacem habebamus et fora . . . conveniebant canesii . . .*", etc. Cf. N. Iorga, "Momente istorice", Academia Română, Memoriile secției istorice, Seria III, Tomul VII, 1937.

An event took place, however, which delayed this union. Coming from the west, the Hungarians, obliged to protect themselves from the nomads — Asiatics like themselves — who were assailing them from the east, extended their State to the chain of the Carpathians, which they considered as a wall of defence. Thus it was because of the Hungarians, themselves driven by necessity, that *a political frontier was for the first time set up along the Carpathian chain* — a frontier which split in two the Rumanian people. The mountains which until then had been the “backbone” of the Dacian, Daco-Roman and Rumanian people, now became a wall of separation in the midst of the autochthonous racial mass.

In consequence, the political development of the Rumanians was able to take place in entire liberty only to the east of the Carpathians. Here, indeed, the small duchies which had sprung up along the southern Carpathians coalesced and rapidly reached the sea and the “Tatar” frontier, that is to say, the steppe situated between the mouth of the Dniester and that of the Danube. Other small political units along the eastern Carpathians united and stretched out to the Dniester and the Black Sea. In the 14th century, the Rumanian State launched a great offensive toward the east, and succeeded in extending its conquests as far as the Black Sea.

Here we see applied the geographical law that every State in a phase of vigorous growth *tends to reach the shores of the nearest sea*. Under Mircea the Elder and Alexander the Good, the Muntenians (i.e., the Rumanians between the Carpathians and the Danube) and the Moldavians (the Rumanians between the Carpathians and the Dniester) succeeded in obtaining access to the sea.

At the same time, the Rumanian princes kept *their territorial possessions beyond the Carpathians*, on the plateau of Transylvania.

But just at the moment when this movement of territorial integration had taken so favourable a turn, a new wave of invaders — from the south this time: the Turks —

poured into the country. The Ottoman Turks, like all the conquerors from the Huns to the Tatars, had set out to conquer Europe, and it was once more against the Carpathians that they first directed their assault.

The first effect of the Turkish invasion was that the Rumanians lost once more the strip of land along the sea, access to which was thus closed to them. Mircea lost the Dobrogea, and Stephen the Great lost Chilia and Cetatea Albă. The capture of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles by the Turks made the Black Sea a Turkish lake for 500 years. But the Danube and the Carpathians preserved their political importance; while all the neighbours of the Rumanians saw their territories absorbed in the Ottoman Empire, at least for a time, the Rumanian Principalities preserved their *territorial individuality without interruption* from the Middle Ages to our day ¹⁾.

More than that, the great struggle which the Rumanians carried on against the Turks revealed the necessity of uniting all the elements of the same race and of *forming a single state having as its physical basis the Carpathian mountain system*.

In 1600, Michael the Brave united under his sceptre nearly the whole of Trajan's Dacia and was crowned sovereign of all the Rumanians at Alba Iulia, the ancient Apulum. This was, no doubt, the achievement of a man of great military genius, who enlarged the political frontiers by extending them again to the Dniester, the Black Sea, and the Danube. But in this conquest we must also take into account *the physical configuration of the country — of the Carpathian range — which inevitably forced the prince who would fight against the Turks to seek the centre of gravity of his State in the geometrical centre of the territory occupied by the Rumanian people*.

The year 1600 therefore marks a summit, as regards territorial extent, in the history of the Rumanian State — a higher point than that of the year 1400 (Mircea the Elder).

¹⁾ See the map on p. 21.

But the noble ambition of Michael had aimed too high. The effort which he had made to reach his goal was premature. Upon his death a regression set in. Other States of greater size reaped the fruits of his struggles against the Turk: Austria and Russia, late-comers upon the stage of eastern Europe. It was now the turn of these two powers, in their march toward Constantinople and the Black Sea, to collide with the Rumanian provinces, which formed an obstacle in their path. Austria, defeating the Turks at the beginning of the 18th century, occupied the *Banat*, with which she had never had the slightest relations; next she annexed the region of *Oltenia* (the triangle between the *Olt*, the *Danube* and the *Carpathians*), to which, likewise, she had never had even a hypothetical claim. After the loss of the *Dobrogea* at the beginning of the 15th century, the loss of *Oltenia* at the beginning of the 18th constituted the second territorial amputation of *Muntenia*. Fortunately, *Oltenia* was lost for only twenty years. Another war, in which Austria was vanquished, restored this territory to Rumania.

Thenceforth the cupidity of Austria was directed elsewhere. At the end of the same century, she once more seized a portion of Rumanian territory when she laid hands on the northern part of *Moldavia*, on the pretext that she needed it to defend her share in the spoils of the partition of *Poland*. The annexation of this region, where Austria had not possessed a square inch of land, was the third mutilation inflicted on Rumanian territory. The section thus seized was baptised "*Bukovina*", and remained an Austrian possession until the recent defeat of the *Habsburg* monarchy.

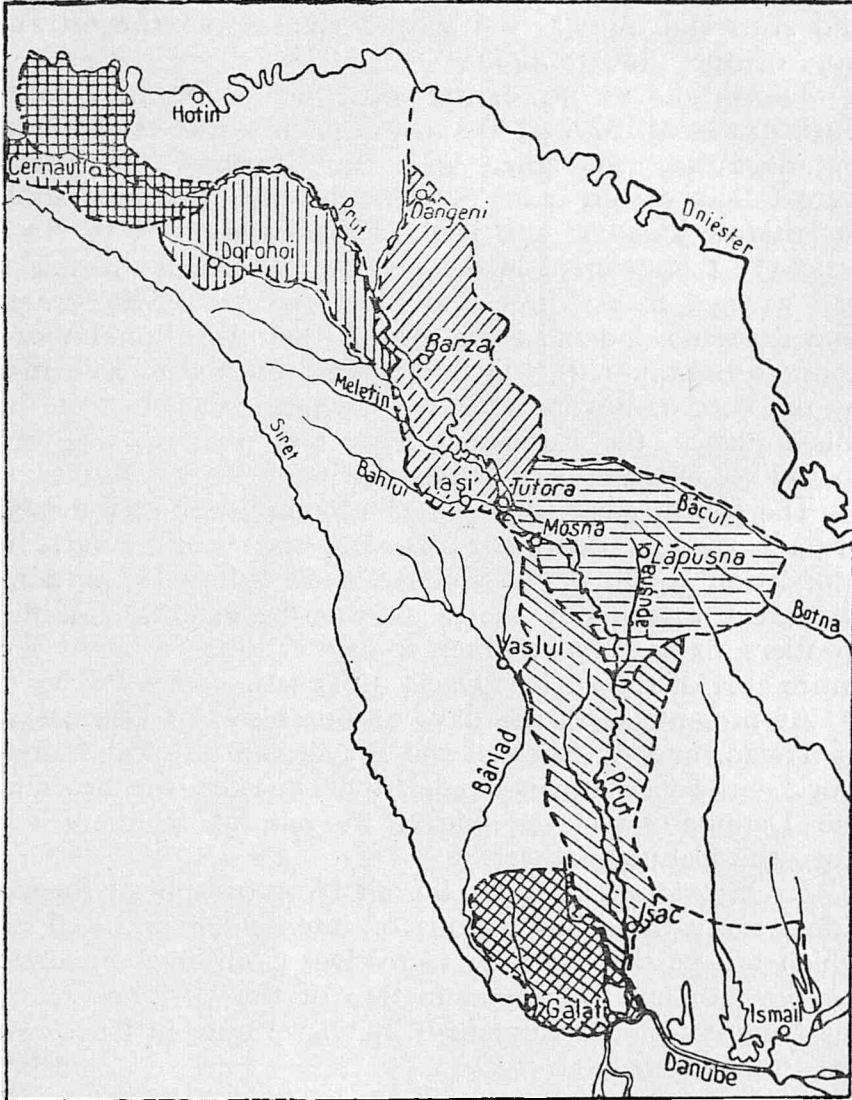
The Russians likewise were hampered by the Rumanian Principalities in their march toward the coveted *Bosphorus*; and at the beginning of the 19th century, a few years after the seizure of *Finland*, the *Tsar Alexander* split *Moldavia* in two, taking from it all the territory between the *Dniester* and the *Prut* — a district in which the *Muscovites* had never possessed so much as a blade of grass.

Thus, two centuries after the death of Michael the Brave, who may rightly be called the "*restitutor Daciae*", the *Rumanian State was reduced to its simplest expression*. The Turks, in the course of so many centuries of struggle, had taken from Rumania only a strip of land along the sea (the Dobrogea and the Bugeac, a small belt of steppe country between the mouth of the Dniester and the delta of the Danube); but the Christian States, Austria and Russia, in less than a century (1718—1812), had robbed it of about *half of its territory east of the Carpathians*.

Indeed, the Russian annexation of eastern Moldavia did not merely cut in two the principality of Stephen the Great; districts lying on both sides of the Prut, forming natural territorial units of which that river was the artery, were split lengthwise. At the same time the Russians, following Austria's example, changed the name of the half of Moldavia which they had seized and called it Bessarabia — a name properly applied to the seaboard but which, by a process of cartographic camouflage, they extended to the whole country, which had never borne that name and had never had anything to do with the Bassarab dynasty.

But the movement toward national restoration which had sprung up in Italy, in Germany, and even in smaller countries, was bound to spread presently to the Carpathian region and to the mouths of the Danube. As soon as the Black Sea ceased to be a Turkish lake and began to be ploughed by the ships of other States (and especially by English and French vessels which came seeking cargoes of wheat from the Rumanian plain), the question of the Mouths of the Danube became a European question, linked with that of the Straits. The Crimean War having brought this question to the fore, the *Treaty of Paris gave the Rumanians access to the sea once again by compelling the Russians to return Bessarabia*. This was the first step toward the reconstitution of the territory. Shortly after, in agreement with the views of the Great "Powers", who very properly favoured the formation of a buffer state

at the mouths of the Danube, capable of checking the advance of the Russians toward the Bosphorus, the Ruma-



Moldavian districts detached from the Prut basin in 1812 by the annexation of half of Moldavia

nians in 1859 united Moldavia and Muntenia into a single

State. This was accomplished by the election of John Alexander Cuza as Prince of both countries, and was carried through in spite of the protests and intrigues of Russia and Austria. This was the second step toward the restoration of the old frontiers.

The third was one of the consequences of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877. At the cost of great sacrifices of blood by the Rumanians allied with the Russians, the Turks were finally driven from the Danube line. Rumania took the title of kingdom and recovered possession of the Dobrogea — that strip of land along the sea which the Turks had wrested from Mircea the Elder five centuries before. The Russians, indeed, allies though they were, once more annexed Bessarabia ¹⁾, which had been restored to Rumania by the vote of Europe after the Crimean War. In spite of this injustice, the Rumanian State was now on the way to the reconstitution of its territory.

The fourth step, finally, was accomplished at the cost of still greater sacrifices, following the World War. In proportion to its population, Rumania suffered exceptionally great losses. But the result was the extension of the frontiers of the State, which to-day includes roughly the entire area of the ancient Dacia of Trajan.

At present, as in the days of Burebista, of Decebalus, of Trajan, and of Michael the Brave, the physical framework — the Carpathian citadel, the Dniester, the Sea and the Danube — encloses within its natural frontiers the Carpatho-Danubian State.

2. *Organic orientation.* Like all bio-geographical formations, every State has regions of intense life and regions which are passive or even regressive. Confining ourselves for the moment to an examination of the periphery, i.e., the frontiers of the Rumanian State, we note in particular the following facts:

a) *The eastern frontier of Rumania is in general passive.* The valley of the Dniester, with its deep-cut windings,

¹⁾ Treaty of Berlin, drawn up under the presidency of Bismarck.

bears a striking resemblance to a trench. This comparison is not merely suggested by the map, but is a fact long since recorded both by ethnography and by history.

From ancient times it has been possible to observe here the opposition between the people of the Carpathian region and that of the steppes beyond the Dniester. When Darius Hystaspes made war on the Scythians, the latter sought to involve the people of the Carpathian country in their adventures; Herodotus adds that these *nomads were repulsed by the people of the country as an element of a different race* ¹⁾.

Again, in the Middle Ages, when the Rumanians of Moldavia extended their State eastward from the Carpathians, they stopped at the Dniester as the most natural frontier.

The greatest work accomplished by the Rumanian princes in political geography was to *strengthen and multiply the defensive works facing the steppe*. From the old citadel near the mouth of the Dniester (Cetatea Albă = Tyras) to Hotin, the trench of the Dniester was strengthened by the construction of a line of fortresses, while in the interior of the country fortified places were quite rare.

In modern times too, the eastern frontier has been and has remained passive. The near neighbourhood of the Tatars hindered until the 18th century all commercial initiative. After the Tatars, in 1792, the Russians appeared on the banks of the Dniester, brought thither by the comic opera schemes of Potemkin and the romantic ambitions of Catherine II ²⁾.

With the establishment of the Russians (who, twenty years later, advanced their boundary to the Prut), the eastern border of Rumania lost all semblance of life. The exchange of goods fell to zero, since the goods produced were practically the same on both sides of the boundary.

¹⁾ See p. 59.

²⁾ She planned to restore the Byzantine Empire, with Constantinople as the capital of the Tsars; Austria was to be given Italy in compensation, and the Emperor Joseph II was to receive Rome as seat of the Hapsburgs.

The exchange of ideas was likewise non-existent. Russia, a reactionary state, sought to preserve herself from anything resembling a liberal influence; moreover, she tried to isolate as completely as possible the half of Moldavia which she had annexed in 1812 from the other half which had remained a part of the Rumanian State. The frontier, literally paralysed, finally became a "dead frontier" ¹⁾.

Finally, our experience with the Russians during the World War, and the events of the following years, accentuated still further this state of affairs. By their withdrawal from the battle front in 1917, the Russians left in the hearts of the Rumanian people a painful impression which will never be effaced. It is characteristic that the Rumanian army, that is to say, the mass of the nation in arms, in spite of all the cruel sufferings of the war, proved absolutely refractory to the new political conceptions which sprang up in Russia. Thus the Dniester, together with the long eastern boundaries of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland, has come to form a part of the great *frontier of the European political system* opposed to the political world situated to the east of the Ponto-Baltic isthmus.

b) Thus Rumania, by its economic relations as well as by its civilisation, belongs to the western world.

To maintain normal relations in this direction, Rumania has two fairly satisfactory routes: (1) from the mouth of the Danube to the Black Sea and the Bosphorus, and thence to the Mediterranean (2); by the valley of the Danube toward Central Europe, and thence to the Rhine countries.

The Black Sea route is the older. In the Geto-Dacian and Daco-Roman periods, the Black Sea shore was the chief point of contact between Dacia and the rest of the world. In the Middle Ages, when the Venetians and the Genoese sailed this sea, the whole Black Sea coast was very flourishing. But, when the Black Sea came under the

¹⁾ Along the whole length of the Prut, there were only two railway connections between the two countries (at Ungheni and Reni); even here, since the Russian tracks were of a wider gauge than those of Europe, no train could pass beyond the Prut.

power of the crescent, Rumanian commercial activity turned toward Central Europe and toward Poland.

Finally, in modern times, when Rumania was ground between Austria-Hungary and Russia as between two mill-stones, she sought, as a last resort, a route toward the Adriatic by way of Serbia, in order to have an outlet to the Mediterranean.

Today, since navigation on the Danube has been made free to its source, the most vital points of the frontier are naturally those lying on the Danube, which affords Rumania easy communications with the countries of the west.

To sum up, this State, connected with the Carpathians and the Danube, is attached by its physical structure and by its economic, political and spiritual relations to Europe proper, of which it is an indispensable element.

The inevitability of this orientation was confirmed in an unexpected fashion just after the great war. In 1919, attacked without warning by Hungary (under the bolshevik régime of Bela Kun), Rumania suddenly found herself isolated between the Soviet republic to the east of the Dniester and the revolutionary republic in the Pannonian plain. But the successful campaign of the Rumanian army and the resulting occupation of Budapest rapidly extinguished the bolshevik menace in Hungary, and restored contact between Rumania and the western world from which she had been separated by the firebrand hurled from Moscow.

III. THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL OUTLOOK AND THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE DANUBE BASIN

The situation of Rumania at the mouths of the Danube presents the following characteristics from the standpoint of economic geography:

1. *Rumania is situated on the line connecting the most densely populated regions of the Old World.* The map shows us that the most populous zone of Eurasia is that which

begins in the British Isles, passes through the Rhine and Danube valleys, and ends in the plains of the Euphrates, the Indus and the Ganges. This concentration of population is partly due, as is well known, to the climate which has made it possible to practise a somewhat more intense system of agriculture.

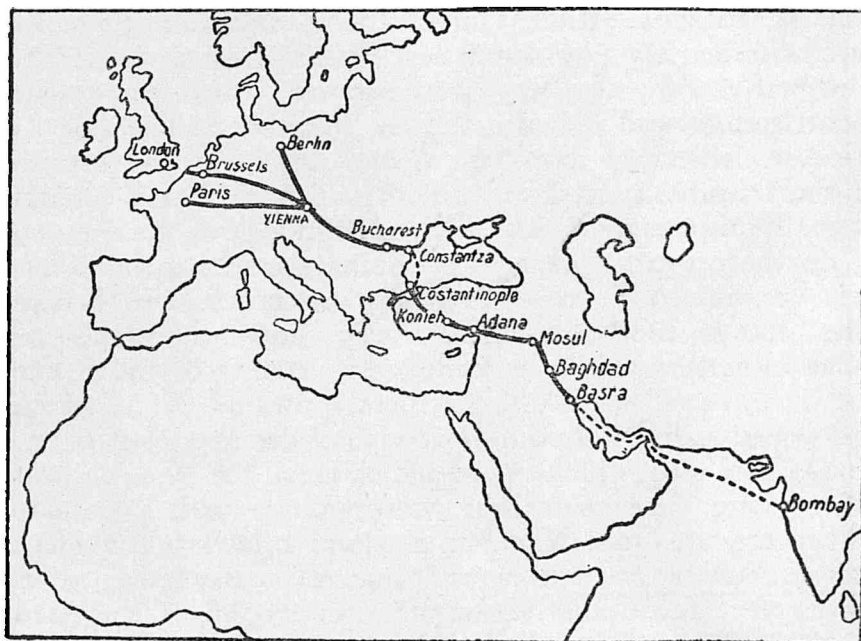
Twenty-five hundred years ago, the most densely populated part of Europe was the region of the Carpathians and the Balkans — the basin of the lower Danube; while the most densely populated part of Asia was India. Half-way between the two was Mesopotamia, made very fertile by irrigation, and likewise thickly populated. The line of greatest density of population then began at the mouth of the Danube, passed through Asia Minor and the plain of the Euphrates, and extended to the mouth of the Ganges.

In the centuries which have since elapsed, the line has been prolonged to the north-west as far as the British Isles, and to the south-east as far as Java, where the population density to-day is comparable to that of the Rhine and Thames valleys. The map, then, shows us a zone which follows the line London-Bagdad-Batavia and which includes the most thickly populated areas of the eastern Hemisphere. The revival of Mesopotamia will accentuate still further this fact of human geography. Now it is evident that a country situated on this line, as is Rumania, occupies a very favourable economic situation, since the need for the exchange of goods here makes itself felt more keenly than elsewhere.

2. *Rumania is situated on a highly favourable line of navigation*; for the Danube is certainly the most important river of the European continent. While all the others seek the periphery and tend to reach the sea by the shortest route, the Danube follows an inland course and traverses almost the entire European continent from the north-west to the south-east. Because of this fact and of the river's near approach to the Rhine, it seems predestined by nature to serve as a highway between the industrial countries of western Europe and the countries of Asia Minor, Meso-

potamia, India and the "Asiatic Mediterranean". It is no doubt for this reason that Napoleon I called the Danube "the king of all the European rivers".

To-day the importance of this waterway appears more clearly than ever. The countries of the lower Danube produce annually about 35 million tons of grain (or about a tenth of the world production); and half of this quantity

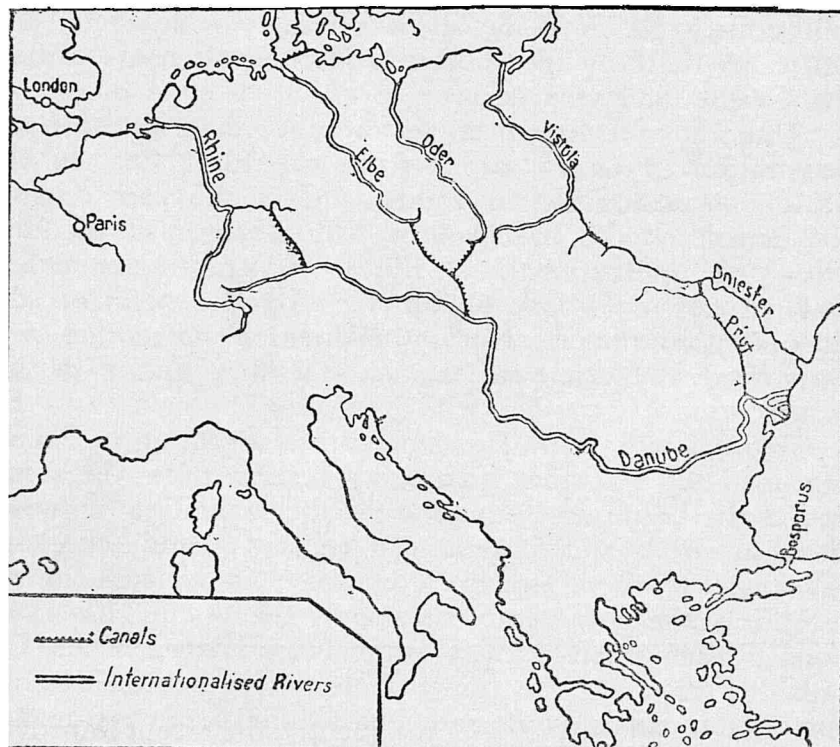


Axis of traffic

is produced for export. Consequently, the recent improvement of the Ludwig Canal (which has been deepened and will presently be navigable for vessels up to 1,500 tons), facilitating as it does communication between the Danube and the Rhine, is a work of first-rate importance for inter-continental traffic. Circulation by this route has been limited hitherto to boats of not more than 150 tons; it is clear that, once improved, the Rhine-Danube trade route will acquire world-wide importance, especially if we consider in connection with it the further possibility,

now under discussion, of joining the Weser, the Elbe and the Oder to the great Danubian artery by canals.

This trade route by internationalised rives and canals will shorten the distance between the Occident and the Orient for certain countries by thousands of miles (2,500 miles for the countries of Central Europe). Goods transport will offer serious competition to the Mediterranean traffic,



Axis of internationalised rivers

so much so that geographers have begun, with some reason, to refer to the navigable Rhine-Danube water-way as the "Eighth Sea". During the World War, the importance of this water-way became so obvious that a plan was discussed for shortening the lower Danube by digging a canal from Cernavodă to Constanța, reviving an English scheme of the middle of the 19th century.

Thus Rumania, which embraces one-third of the whole navigable course of the Danube and the whole of its lower course, which is the only section navigable for ocean-going ships, occupies a manifestly privileged position. When, in addition to the Main-Danube Canal, other canals from the Weser to the Danube, from the Elbe to the Danube (Linz) and from the Oder to the Danube (by the Morava) begin to function, these numerous commercial tributaries will collect goods from an increasingly wide zone, and will carry them by the shortest and cheapest route toward the Orient (and vice versa).

Thus, after having been in antiquity the route for the penetration of Greek goods from the Black Sea, in the Middle Ages for Italian goods, and in the past century for British goods, the Danube will become, in the new phase of internationalised rivers, the most convenient way to convey goods of all sorts to the heart of the European continent. *The line of densest population* will then gradually come to coincide with a *line of densest traffic*.

But this is not all. The geographical situation of Rumania opens up a further prospect. The countries which surround the Baltic are remote from the main line of movement of goods and of passenger traffic. Poland especially, in spite of the Dantzig "corridor", is isolated in the interior of the continent. Fortunately the Vistula, like a second Rhine, opens a way from Poland toward the Danube by the San, the upper Dniester and the Prut. By this route, not only Poland, but all the countries around the Baltic can obtain access to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, and shorten the distance to the Orient by about 3,700 miles.

The route by the Vistula and the Prut is not only the shortest, but it nowhere offers obstacles to traffic as great as those which are encountered between the Rhine, the Weser, and the Elbe and the Danube. In addition, the direction of the Prut, which follows nearly the line of the meridian, seems destined to remedy the disadvantages of

the Dniester route, whose innumerable windings would lengthen the distance to the Black Sea by about 200 miles.

When the Vistula-Prut Canal is completed, the basin of the lower Danube will become *a centre of commercial routes, not only unique in Europe, but without a rival in the Old World.* And Scandinavia and the other Baltic countries will be closer to Suez and the East Indies than the countries of western Europe.



Main lines of air navigation

3. Finally, Rumania is situated on the line of a great international railway and on the air line which connects western Europe with Asia Minor, Mesopotamia and India.

A glance at the railway map suffices to verify the first of these statements. The second calls for some explanation. However free the air may be, mountains still constitute dangerous obstacles to air navigation. Anyone flying from the British Isles or the Rhine valley toward the Orient must avoid the Alps, the Carpathians and the Balkans; but that is possible only by following the line London-Vienna-Belgrade-Bucarest-Constantinople-Ankara. In the same way, the aviator who sets out for the South from Berlin

or from northern Europe in general — where aviation has developed so considerably since the war — must also avoid the Carpathians and reach Constantinople and Ankara by passing over Rumania (Bucharest) and the eastern extremity of the Balkans.

4. Finally, we may add that Rumania occupies a geographical situation very favourable to *wireless telephony*. It is a known fact that zones occur in mountain regions in which wireless reception is difficult. Forests likewise interfere with broadcasting. Thus Bucharest, situated in the treeless plain of the Danube, gives to Rumania, as a wireless station, an appreciable advantage over countries which have a more mountainous surface and which are covered with forests.

CONCLUSION

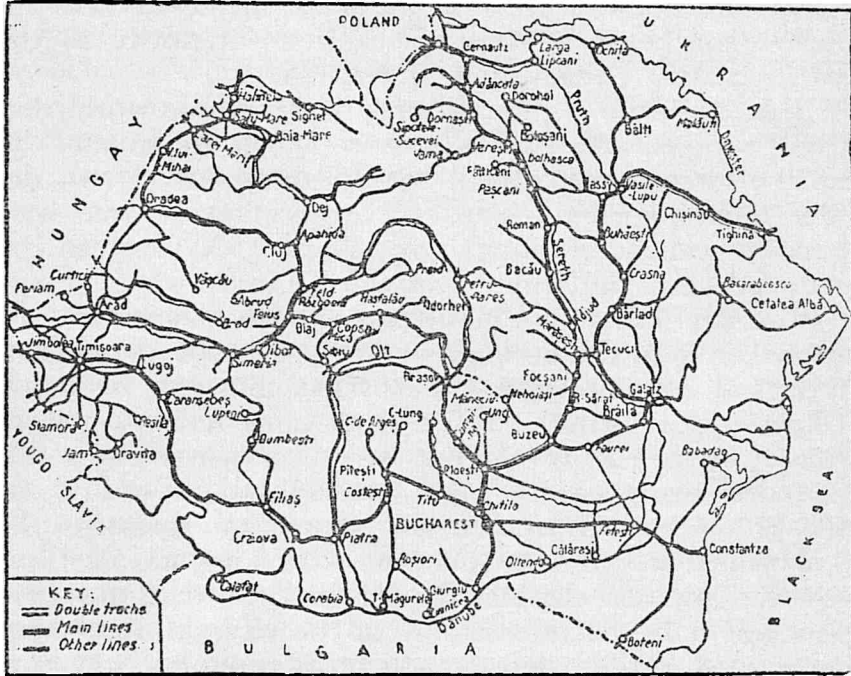
It has now been shown how Rumania, situated on the line connecting the greatest concentrations of population, and on the most direct and cheapest lines of water, air and railway transport (and wireless), occupies an exceptionally favourable position from the standpoint of world trade. But the analysis of this geographical situation draws attention to a further fact which cannot be neglected.

The economic axis of the Old World (namely, the line London-Bagdad-Singapore) has its vital centre at the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. If a great military power were to intercept at this point the stream of trade, it would paralyse at the same time the Suez Canal, and Europe would be thrown back, in a certain measure, into the situation which compelled the great navigators of the 15th century to seek a route to the Orient around Africa.

Now this danger is not a mere hypothesis. To possess the Bosphorus is a favourite Russian dream. Especially during the past two centuries, the Muscovite Empire was hypnotised by the idea of a Russian Constantinople — a dream which it regarded as almost realised in February 1915, following the declarations made in the English Parliament.

Thus the considerations of economic geography set forth above are connected with questions of political geography; among others, the problem of ensuring the freedom of the straits and especially its nerve centre — the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.

If this problem is to be solved, it is necessary to take measures appropriate to the needs of the modern age and,



Rumanian railway system

in particular, to the inter-dependence of all the branches of world trade. Unfortunately, Europe seems determined to lag behind the progress accomplished elsewhere. While the New World is moving toward the organization of a great economic unity, demanding from each of its regions the *maximum production*, and taking steps to obtain a *maximum circulation*, Europe, handicapped by an excessive number of inconvenient frontiers and by obsolete ideas, is seeking in too many cases to organize its economic

life on the basis of national isolation. But, just as a State which clung to transport by ox-carts instead of by railway trains, or which carried on its postal service by stage-coaches and messengers instead of by express trains and the telegraph, would constitute a zone of economic paralysis for all its neighbours, so a Europe wedded to routine and determined to remain divided into as many economic units as there are political units on the map, already is, and will continue to be, in a state of manifest inferiority to the United States, Canada and Australia.

It is, therefore, to the interest of the whole world that certain regions, and especially those which are situated on the line already mentioned, should carry out certain definite improvements toward the realisation of free economic movement. As long as vessels of 1,500 tons can circulate between the Rhine and the Danube, while vessels of more than 650 tons cannot pass the Iron Gates; as long as sandbanks in the Sulina arm of the Danube delay navigation and even necessitate the partial unloading of ships; as long as the Cernavodă-Constanța canal remains a mere project; as long as we do not have everywhere along this line ports equipped for rapid loading and unloading; as long as the danger of Russian occupation threatens the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus; — as long as all these obstacles are not eliminated, it is evident that they will affect, not only the transactions of the riparian States, but also a much more extensive sphere of economic interests. The “eighth sea”, like all the other seas of the planet, must become, therefore, as soon as possible, a way of communication capable in all respects of serving the interests of world traffic.

The way in which this problem will be solved in practice is a matter for economic and political technique. Considered in historical and geographical perspective, it does not seem far from a concrete solution. Until Christopher Columbus, the life of mankind remained limited to the old continent. After the crossing of the Atlantic, and especially after the exploration of the Pacific (Cook, La Perouse,

etc.), there began the "intercontinental phase". Finally, aviation, born within our own lifetime, has introduced us to a new era — which we might call "age of the air", characterised by economic and social union over-riding all boundaries; for, if the dry land is still national property, the ocean, the seas, and even certain rivers have already become international property; and *the air belongs to all*.

Mankind, then, is beginning to appear to us more and more as a "league of nations"; and, just as there exist sanitary measures to avoid epidemics such as cholera, the plague, and other similar pestilences, so we are beginning to consider as possible *measures of world agreement relative to zones of common interest*. There are facts which prove the accuracy of this remark. During the purely continental period, it was not possible to carry out an international demonstration, even by an armed force. The Abbé de Saint-Pierre, discussing universal peace on the occasion of the Peace of Utrecht (1713), suggested as a means of maintaining peace an association of twenty-four States and an armed force composed of the police of these States. But this proposal was chimerical for many reasons, and especially because of the difficulty of land transport. But, as soon as the ocean became an element in international law, "collective fleets" began to make demonstrations, not only in Europe (in Crete), but in the Far East (in China). Finally, in this day of air navigation, the intervention of *a common and even neutral force* becomes a very easy matter. "If all the nations of the world were firmly decided to throw their military, naval and air forces into the scale, whenever one among them was guilty of an aggression, all aggression and all war would be rendered impossible. England and the United States, which are particularly loath to accept any agreement which would make them jointly responsible with other nations . . . , should meditate upon the lessons of history" ¹⁾.

One of the latest of these lessons is the declaration of February 1915, by which England agreed to leave Russia

¹⁾ E. Borel, *Organiser*, Paris, 1925, p. 54.

a free hand with regard to the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles — a step which meant a great danger for Suez and, therefore, for Mediterranean traffic in general.

But perhaps the greatest lesson which history has to teach us is the necessity of organizing an air fleet to keep the peace. Since trans-oceanic flights have been made so successfully, it would be no lack of a sense of history and world politics to regard war as a sort of conflagration which even a private insurance company might be given the duty of extinguishing, by taking steps against the scourge, wherever it breaks out, with "physical" impartiality.

In this age of gas technique, a neutral air fleet could thus easily localise any political conflagration, and could immediately force the aggressors to bring their disputes before special tribunals.

At the same time, the "age of the air" offers new possibilities for the balance of power, for gases equalise chances.

Even the small countries can take out insurance against political conflagrations by participating in the production of chemical weapons. By means of gases, little Switzerland could carry out the same mandate as Great Britain.

The Continent made possible the establishment of the monarchic system, from Memphis to Niniveh, from China to Mexico and Peru.

The sea favoured the old aristocratic republics of Tyre, Sidon, Venice and Genoa, as it still favours today the gigantic Metropolis of the United States.

The air is the truly democratic medium; for even the smallest States will be able to breathe freely, if they come to an understanding and organize among themselves.

For the time being, the rôle of Rumania is clear: just as, in antiquity, Dacia was the last province of the Roman Empire to the east, so in our day Rumania, by its geographic position at the mouths of the Danube, is the outpost of Europe, destined to maintain, as far as its means permit, the relations between western Europe and the Asiatic world, on the line which marks the maximum density of population on our planet.

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